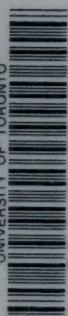
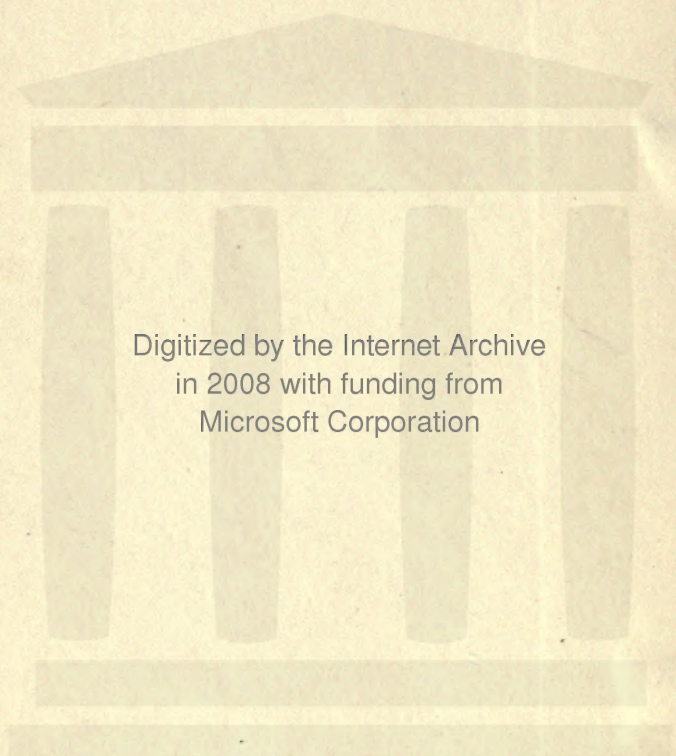


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THE INFLUENCE OF
WALTER SCOTT ON THE NOVELS
OF THEODOR FONTANE

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THE INFLUENCE OF WALTER SCOTT ON THE NOVELS OF THEODOR FONTANE

BY

LAMBERT ARMOUR SHEARS, PH.D.

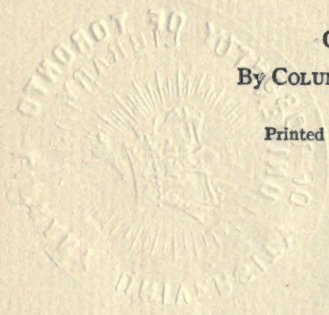


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*To My Father
Who First Awakened in Me
a Love
for the Study of German*

PREFACE

The present study owes its origin to a conversation on the German novel of the nineteenth century which I had with Professor Frederick W. J. Heuser early in 1920. On this occasion Professor Heuser called my attention to a paper written by Dr. Friedrich Schönmann in 1915 for the American Modern Language Association entitled "Theodor Fontane und England," in which is discussed the influence of certain British novelists on the fiction of Fontane. This essay formed the starting-point for my investigation. To Dr. Schönmann too I am deeply indebted for valuable advice, especially during the early stages of my work. It is also a particular pleasure to acknowledge here the inestimable assistance rendered by Miss Bertha E. Trebein, the author of the monograph, *Theodor Fontane as a Critic of the Drama*. Doctor Trebein, who had access in Berlin to Fontane's unpublished diaries and letters as well as to the files of various periodicals, has most generously given me the benefit of her exhaustive research. For information concerning details of Fontane's works and literary activity I am obliged to the very cordial co-operation of Mr. Friedrich Fontane, the publisher, a son of the novelist. More than to anyone, however, the successful completion of this monograph—the difficulty of which cannot be judged by its length—is due to the fruitful suggestions and the constant, stimulating encouragement of Professor Robert Herndon Fife. Helpful counsel was also given by Professor Heuser and Professor Henry H. L. Schulze. To Professor Fife and to my colleague Dr. Gerhard Baerg of Wesleyan University, I am indebted for assistance in reading the proof.

LAMBERT ARMOUR SHEARS

MIDDLETOWN, CONNECTICUT
November, 1921

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INTRODUCTION

Scholars have generally concluded from Fontane's activity as a translator of English and Scotch poems and from his long residence as journalist in England that English influences played some part in his development as an author. But they usually limit this indebtedness to the ballad writer and translator, neglecting entirely a consideration of the possible influence of British novelists, especially Scott, on the fiction of the German writer.

Yet the allusions to Scott in Fontane's works extend over a period of many years—from boyhood to old age. The depth of the poet's enthusiasm is attested by every mention of the great author, even by those references dating from Fontane's later period, when he had become the realistic portrayer of Berlin life. The mature writer, to be sure, is more conscious of Scott's careless technique, but this fact does not mar his enjoyment of the *Waverley Novels* nor his appreciation of Scott's unique genius.¹ Indeed, the references to Scott are found in practically every genre of Fontane's works,—autobiography, letters and diary, in descriptions of travel, in critical essays, in novels and in poetry.²

¹ Cf. letter, Aug. 13, 1877. W, 2, VI, 247.

² However, we find few definite statements by Fontane of works which he must have used to obtain his extensive knowledge of the novelist, the poet, the great personality, the ballad editor and critic. Fontane mentions having read some essay of Scott concerning a point of technique in *Waverley*,—"Hermann und Dorothea," in *Literarische Studien und Eindrücke*. W, 2, IX, 221.

In the chapter "Abbotsford" in *Jenseit des Tweed*, p. 510, he cites "Lockhart," (title of book not given), concerning a detail in Scott's life. For a translation of Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, which the poet probably used cf. below, p. 8, footnote.

A few representative extracts will illustrate the poet's familiarity with the Scottish writer and his attitude toward him.

The elderly author of *Meine Kinderjahre* (1893) still remembers with gratitude the scraps of Scott which as a boy in Swinemünde he heard from his father, who read exclusively Scott.³ The discovery in 1848 of Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, a book which with Percy's *Reliques of Ancient Poetry*, determined Fontane's direction and taste for years,⁴ showed him a new side of Scott, viz., the student and recreator of popular ballads. Twenty years later there appears one of the poet's most enthusiastic effusions concerning Scott's genius. Fontane is reading the *Tales of a Grandfather*. He explains that while Scott wrote this history for his grandson, "the great Waverley poet wrote it with a still later object, for a baby who just at that time lay in his cradle in the *Löwen-Apotheke* in Neu-Ruppin. And the said baby, now pretty well grown up, is delighted with every line, with the child-like manner, with the classical simplicity of expression, and exclaims louder than ever, 'long live Scott; you others are after all nothing but bunglers (*Nachtwächter*).'"⁵

As late as 1884 Fontane would seem to be reading his favorite author again. "Yes Walter Scott . . . is a blessing, like forest and mountain air. Men write after all as they are. He was a delightful human specimen (*Menschen-Exemplar*), a genuine, real gentleman."⁶

Even in the dialogue of his novels Fontane has allusions to Scott. In *Cécile* there is, to be sure, no specific mention of Scott, but the references there to Mary Stuart and Lochleven suggest the *Abbot*. There is also an allusion to Scott

³ W, 2, II, 106.

⁴ W, 2, III, 22.

⁵ Letter, May 20, 1868. W, 2, VI, 149.

⁶ Unpublished letter, June 18, 1884, transmitted to the writer by Miss B. E. Trebein.

in *Graf Petöfy*.⁷ *Unwiederbringlich* (1892) and *Effi Briest* (1895) both contain direct references to the Waverley Novels. In the former story, Count Holk, who is just leaving for Copenhagen, directs his servant to take along a few volumes of Scott. ". . . you never can tell, and he is always suitable."⁸ In *Effi Briest*, the heroine sends her servant for books, mentioning among other *Ivanhoe* and *Quentin Durward*.⁹ Fontane also wrote two poems presenting characteristic events in the life of Sir Walter: "Walter Scotts Einzug in Abbotsford" and "Walter Scott in Westminster-Abtei."

In view of quotations and allusions such as have just been given it seems strange that the influence of Scott on the novelist Fontane, especially on the author of historical novels, has not received more general attention from scholars. Moreover, we should expect that some of the obvious romantic features in Fontane's novels, particularly *Vor dem Sturm* (such as the character of Hoppenmarieken, the supernatural etc.), and also that an acknowledgment which Fontane makes of general indebtedness to Scott in his first novel¹⁰ would have directed investigators to this subject. One of the latter, Wandrey, who in his valuable recent biography of Fontane consistently neglects the importance of the study of sources, disposes of the romantic elements in *Vor dem Sturm* very easily. "The retarding, long-spun-out parts are counteracted by many elements, features which are to be ascribed to the old novel of popular entertainment, romantic in the unpleasant sense, rather than considered as springing from the essential nature of the ballad-writer."¹¹

However, most scholars have taken the position that

⁷ W, I, IV, 197.

⁸ W, I, VII, 62.

⁹ W, I, IX, 247.

¹⁰ Cf. letter, June 17, 1866. W, 2, X, 246.

¹¹ Conrad Wandrey, *Theodor Fontane*, S. 115.

Fontane in his historical novels is a pupil of Alexis.¹² The reasons for this are not far to seek. Both Alexis and Fontane are pioneer poets of the Mark Brandenburg, both treat the same period and select the same central figure in their historical novels, Alexis in *Isegrimm*, and Fontane in *Vor dem Sturm*. Moreover, there is a general similarity in technique in these two works. In view of the statement of Tschirch that Fontane himself declared that he never came into close contact with Alexis and only in later life became more intimately acquainted with his novels, it would seem that the influence of Alexis on Fontane has been greatly exaggerated by investigators.¹³

A few scholars, however, do concede the influence of Scott on Fontane's historical novels. Among these, Schönemann states the poet's relation to the British author most clearly.¹⁴ Maync in his excellent little study of Fontane also acknowledges this influence.¹⁵

¹² Kummer, who devotes considerable space to Fontane,—*Deutsche Literaturgeschichte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*, S. 616 ff.,—and Hayens, *Theodor Fontane*, p. 35,—even bring in the name of Hesekei in this connection, without acknowledging that Fontane owed any direct indebtedness to Scott. Georg Hesekei, the poet's associate on the staff of the *Kreuzzeitung*, wrote a conventional type of novel in the manner of Scott, treating the Napoleonic era in Prussia. But that this *Vielschreiber* could have exerted any tangible influence on Fontane seems highly improbable. Fontane, it is true, made the Wars of Liberation the subject of novels, but so did a number of German writers who followed the Scott tradition. Cf. Mielke, *Der deutsche Roman*, 4. Ausg., Dresden, 1912, S. 103.

¹³ "Wilibald Alexis als vaterländischer Dichter und Patriot," *Forschungen zur Brandenburgischen und Preussischen Geschichte*. Bd. XII (1899), S. 224. As I cannot find the statement referred to by Tschirch in Fontane's works, this communication seems to have been made orally.

¹⁴ Friedrich Schönemann, "Theodor Fontane und England," *Publications of the Modern Language Association*. 1915. Vol. XXX, p. 669 ff.

¹⁵ Harry Maync, *Theodor Fontane 1819-1919*. S. 35. R. M. Meyer,—*Geschichte der deutschen Literatur*. Vol. II. *Die deutsche Literatur des neunzehnten und zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts*. S. 402, calls *Vor dem Sturm* an "historical novel of the Walter Scott school."

In the first chapter of the present investigation we shall trace the early manifestations of Fontane's interest in English literature, as shown, first by the poetizing young apothecary, who is fond of trying his hand at translations from English, and later by the ballad writer, who reads his poems on British and Scotch subjects at meetings of the important Berlin literary society, the "Tunnel über der Spree."

In the second chapter we shall then follow the journalist to England and observe his reactions to this country, the object of his early enthusiasm, as expressed particularly in the collection of feuilleton articles *Aus England und Schottland*. Here we will note the ripening of Fontane's literary powers. Just as the ballad author began as the pupil of English and Scotch teachers, so too the novelist served a part of his apprenticeship with British masters. For the young Fontane the most important of these was Walter Scott. It is significant that the conception of the poet's first great historical novel, which, as we shall see, is full of Scott influences, dates back to the year 1856, when the author was still in England.

In the third chapter it will be shown that Fontane, who succeeded Alexis as a poet of the Mark Brandenburg, bases his theories regarding the treatment of the historical novel on Scott's practice. We shall there consider how far he carries out these principles in his first novel, *Vor dem Sturm*, the scene of which is laid in Brandenburg.

Finally, in the fourth and fifth chapters the writer has proceeded to a detailed, comparative study of the novel of Fontane and Scott.¹⁶ Despite the fact that no definite statement of Scott's influence has been made either by Fontane or by students of Fontane, it has been possible to adduce

¹⁶ As far as I am aware, the present investigation is the first study which has been made of the sources of Fontane's novels.

certain striking evidence of dependence of the German writer on the author of the Waverley novels.

This influence of Scott on Fontane's novels is confined, as we shall see, chiefly to the poet's maiden effort in fiction, the long historical novel *Vor dem Sturm* (1878). However, there are also well-defined traces of Scott to be found in the works of the mature realist. For Fontane began his literary career devoted to the romantic movement, and he never entirely forsook his early love, as Romanticism in the broad, popular sense of the term formed an essential element of his nature. To our author Scott represented the *Altromantik*, which he calls "an eternal thing, that is almost synonymous with the conception of the poetic."¹⁷

The total amount of Fontane's indebtedness to Scott is, to be sure, very small, when the bulk of the German author's work is taken into account, and is limited largely to subject-matter, although traces may also be found of Scott's technique in Fontane's novels. Nevertheless it is often clear and definite, and forms a striking contrast with the more realistic body of the work.¹⁸

¹⁷ Essay, "Wilibald Alexis." W, 2, IX, 215.

¹⁸ There doubtless exists in several of Fontane's novels general Scott influence, such as the presence of supernatural elements in *Vor dem Sturm*, but I have avoided seeking such points, as they are more or less intangible and difficult to establish.

· CHAPTER I

FONTANE'S EARLY INTEREST IN ENGLISH LITERATURE

When Theodor Fontane was in the seventh year of his age, his parents moved to Swinemünde on the Baltic, where the boy spent five years rich in experience of value for the future author. Swinemünde was well calculated to kindle the fantasy of an imaginative youth. The population, as the poet tells us in *Meine Kinderjahre*,¹ had a free international tone, since it included among its citizens the descendants of a number of north-European nations.

As a sea-faring people, the inhabitants of the little Baltic town were familiar with England and the English language. Eagerly young Fontane would listen to the marvellous tales of the nautical visitors. "For half-hours at a time I watched, when I could, the work of the English dredge, the engineer of which, an old Scotchman by the name of Macdonald, was my particular patron. That I, a generation later, should make a tour through the country of his Scottish clan and go to the place on the island of Icolmskill, where, according to old assumption, King Macbeth lies buried—who could have told me that then!"²

It was as a boy in Swinemünde that Fontane first made the acquaintance of Walter Scott's novels. Young Theodor's father, whose charming personality was greatly admired by his son, had a romantic leaning toward the heroes of history. "He read only Scott, for which I thank him even to-day,

¹ W, 2, II, 66.

² *Ibid.*, p. 63.

as some small crumbs fell to my lot even then."³ The few hints that we receive of Fontane's early interest in Scott are sufficient to indicate the causes of his enthusiasm for the author. The Scott vogue in Germany was at its height in Fontane's youth, and this was the period of the numerous imitations of Scott.⁴ Fontane mentions meeting in Swinemünde the son of Colonel von Witzleben. The latter, using the nom de plume Tromlitz, the poet tells us, enjoyed a fame through his novels in Scott's manner which it is difficult for the present day to comprehend.⁵

It was in Swinemünde too that Fontane's life-long interest in history received its earliest nurture. Here the elder Fontane at one time taught his son by his favorite "Socratic" method, in which anecdotes about Napoleon and his generals played the most important role. Moreover, the years which Fontane spent in this town were rich in stirring events in the world without. Important history was in the making,—the liberation of Greece, the Russo-Turkish war, the July Revolution, and the Polish insurrection. Asked what he wished to be when he grew up, the ten-year old Fontane answered "a professor of history," and when a thirteen-year old *Tertianer* at the *gymnasium* in Neu-Ruppin, he acquired such a reputation in this field that he coached the *Primaner* for their examinations in history.

Fontane's first poem, written at the age of fifteen, and inspired by Chamisso, treats of the "Schlacht bei Hochkirch."⁶ Two years later Fontane composes another historical poem, the epic "Heinrich der Vierte."⁷

³ *Ibid.*, p. 106.

⁴ Cf. below, p. 27.

⁵ W, 2, II, 143.

⁶ This poem doubtless celebrated the Scotch-Prussian Marshal Keith, who lost his life in this battle. Cf. Fontane's poem written later, "Keith."

⁷ Letter, Feb. 14, 1854. W, 2, X, 106.

In 1836 Fontane interrupted his studies to enter on an apprenticeship at the Rose Apotheke in Berlin. When he returned to them seven years later it was with the intention of devoting himself to history. That this plan was not carried out was owing to the arrival of his *Militärjahr*, which began at Easter, 1844. The intervening years, however, cannot have been without importance for his study of English literature. When an apprentice at the Rose Apotheke (1836-1840) it was Fontane's duty to handle a number of modern books, as his employer was one of the founders of a reading circle. Thus the names of "Young Germany" became familiar to him, and he recorded his delight at reading Wienbarg's story *Byrons erste Liebe*.⁸ As these Young German authors were particularly fond of Shakespeare, Byron, and Scott,⁹ it is not unlikely that Fontane came across many English books in this way. Two of his early productions, an epic and a novel, secured for Fontane literary connections, and in 1840, while still at the Rose Apotheke, he joined the Lenau and the Platen Clubs. The next year, when assistant to an apothecary in Leipsic, a satirical poem "Shakespeares Strumpf" brought the author to the notice of the publisher Robert Binder, and he was soon introduced to a Herwegh club. Here Fontane made the acquaintance of Max Müller, at that time only eighteen years old, who was later to prove very helpful to him during his journalistic activity in England. The young poet was affected by all the literary fashions of the day, and the historical verse first inspired by Chamisso gave way during Fontane's stay in Leipsic (1841) to liberal-political lyrics in the style of Herwegh.

Throughout this entire period Fontane seems to have been reading much English literature. In the half-year be-

⁸ W, 2, II, 245.

⁹ L. M. Price, *English-German Literary Influences*, p. 489.

fore joining his regiment at Easter, 1844, he finds relaxation from his studies¹⁰ by reading *Macbeth* and *Hamlet*.¹¹ His first trip to England followed in 1844 during his year in the army, and after his return we find him reading Byron's *Childe Harold*. Young Fontane had indeed already given concrete evidence of his interest in English literature. In 1843 he had made his first serious attempt to establish himself in the literary world by translating from English the poems of the "anti-Cornlaw rhymers" Nichols, which were "very popular in the forties." However, his publisher finally backed out of the undertaking.¹² But even before this Fontane had published translations from English. In 1841 the short-lived periodical *Die Eisenbahn*¹³ contained a contribution from his pen, "Das Gespensterschiff, nach Kapt. Marryat."¹⁴ He also translated, probably before 1844, *The Money-lender*, "a very good novel" by the minor English novelist, Mrs. Gore.¹⁵ Furthermore, an unpublished translation of *Hamlet* in prose and verse, found among Fontane's posthumous manuscripts, is placed by Conrad before the poet's first visit to England, in 1844.¹⁶ Another play of Shakespeare translated by Fontane is *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.¹⁷

¹⁰ Cf. above, p. 3.

¹¹ W, 2, II, 375.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 374.

¹³ IV, No. 50.

¹⁴ Reprinted by Paul Wissmann, *Theodor Fontane. Seine episch-lyrischen Dichtungen*. S. 85.

¹⁵ W, 2, II, 253. I have not had access to a recent investigation of this translation, "Fontane als Übersetzer eines englischen Romans: *Abnedego der Pfandleiher*" by O. Pniower in the *Mitteilungen des Vereins für die Geschichte Berlins*, 1919, 2.

¹⁶ Hermann Conrad, "Theodor Fontanes *Hamlet*." *Das literarische Echo*, II, 15.

¹⁷ *Kritische Causerien über Theater*. W, 2, VIII. Vorwort, S. XII.

The year 1844 was of prime importance for Fontane's development as an author. Through Bernhard von Lepel, an officer in the Kaiser-Franz regiment, in which the poet served his year with the colors, the young writer in May, 1844, was introduced to his fourth literary society, the "Tunnel über der Spree" or the "Berliner Sonntagsverein," and he soon after became a full-fledged member of the organization.¹⁸ The Berlin "Tunnel" is unique for the number of its members who attained the first rank in the world of letters and other fields of art¹⁹ and for the many social classes represented, bound together solely by devotion to high literary ideals. Founded by M. G. Saphir in 1827, it began as a club of literary dilettantes, but developed into a society of poets after Fontane became a member.²⁰

To the influence of the Tunnel Fontane owed his renunciation of poetry in the Herwegh vein, cultivated in the Leipsic period, and his return to the historical verse with which he was to enjoy marked success. He now devoted himself chiefly to the ballad. Indeed the great majority of his ballads from English-Scotch and Prussian history were written during the period 1844-1855, when the poet took an active part in the Tunnel meetings. Soon after his initiation in the Tunnel Fontane came under the sway of a fellow member, Count Moritz Strachwitz, although he never met him at a session of the club. To Strachwitz' ballad "Das Herz von

¹⁸ According to the Tunnel records,—cf. A. R. T. Tielo, "Fontanes erste lyrische Dichtungen." *Allgem. Ztg.*, Beil. München, 1899, No. 128,—"the apothecary Herr Fontane" was received into the society Sept. 29, 1844.

¹⁹ Among authors we find the names of Count Moritz Strachwitz, Theodor Storm, Paul Heyse, Felix Dahn, Emmanuel Geibel, Heinrich Seidel.

²⁰ Cf. Fontane's sketch of the Tunnel and some of its members in *Von Zwanzig bis Dreissig*. W, 2, III, 1 ff. For the early history of the Tunnel cf. *Der Tunnel über der Spree*. I. Kinder- und Flegeljahre 1827-1840, by Dr. Fritz Behrend. Heft 51 of the *Schriften des Vereins für die Geschichte Berlins*. Berlin, 1919.

Douglas" the poet gives the highest praise.²¹ Another member of the Tunnel who must have exerted some influence in introducing Fontane to British literature was Otto Gildemeister who used to read his "masterly translations" from the English at sessions of the Tunnel.²² In 1843, the year before Fontane entered the Tunnel, Gildemeister read his version of the "Douglas-Tragedy." As Wegmann points out,²³ Fontane's determination to translate this poem, read on October 1, 1854, was doubtless strengthened by the example of his predecessor. Fontane was accustomed to read his poems of this period at meetings of the Tunnel, and he became one of the four members who contributed most to the literary entertainment of this society.²⁴ Here he profited greatly by the example of, and competition with poets of high standing, as well as by sharp criticism from masters of the craft.

Fontane's poems of this period on English subjects may be divided into three classes: (1) free renditions of old English and Scotch ballads; (2) ballads; based on English and Scotch subjects, especially history; (3) translations from modern English and Scotch poets.

In 1848 the discovery of Percy's *Reliques of Ancient Poetry* and Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, "two books which determined my direction and taste for years,"²⁵ marks an epoch in Fontane's life and inaugurates an active period of translation. We owe to Wegmann²⁶ an investigation of Fontane's translations of English and Scotch bal-

²¹ W, 2, III, 27.

²² W, 2, III, 332.

²³ Theodor Fontane als Übersetzer englischer und schottischer Balladen, S. 22.

²⁴ W, 2, III, 23.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

²⁶ *Op. cit.*

lads.²⁷ Fontane, according to Wegmann,²⁸ informed Brandl that he used the following books as sources: Percy's *Reliques of Ancient Poetry* (1845), J. S. Moore's *Pictorial Book of Ballads* (London 1847), and Walter Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*. Eleven ballads are translated from Percy, seven from Scott and three from Moore.²⁹ Wegmann has also given the dates when most of these poems were read at sessions of the Tunnel.³⁰ The first of the adaptations from the English, "Chevy Chase" or "Die Jagd im Chevy Forst," from Percy was read December 3, 1848; the last, "Lord Maxwells Lebewohl" from Scott, on April 30, 1859, after the poet's return from his last residence in England.

Fontane's versions of the English ballads are really too free and original to be called translations. These poems, some of which Wegmann considers an improvement on their models, usually received the verdict "very good" from the members of the Tunnel.

The first of a number of ballads on English themes³¹ was written in 1844, in Fontane's first year in the Tunnel.³² These poems received their initial impulse from Fontane's brief English trip in July, 1844. "The poem 'Towerbrand'³³

²⁷ In the volume of Fontane's poems—W, 2, I—under "Lieder und Balladen, frei nach dem Englischen," except "Marie Duchatel," which is found under "Bilder und Balladen. II. Englisch-Schottisches."

²⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 2.

²⁹ Wegmann, *op. cit.*, gives no source for "Lord Murray," "Die Blumen des Waldes," nor for "Leslys Marsch," included among the translations from the English. A version of "Lord Murray," differing considerably from Fontane's poem, is found in Percy's *Reliques*, Vol. II, p. 170. "Die Blumen des Waldes" and "Leslys Marsch" appear in Scott's *Minstrelsy*, Vol. I, p. 274, and Vol. III, p. 141, respectively.

³⁰ The minutes of the Tunnel furnish definite data for all but six of the ballads.

³¹ In the poems under "Bilder und Balladen. II. Englisch-Schottisches."

³² These poems cannot, as Zillmann states,—Friedrich Zillmann, *Theodor Fontane als Dichter, Er und über ihn*, S. 49,—be inspired by Percy and Scott, as Fontane did not become acquainted with these works until 1848.

³³ Read at a Tunnel session Dec. 15, 1844.

made a sort of sensation: I wrote it after my first English trip, still full of London influences and decided to a certain extent as to my course."³⁴ The poet preferred as themes for his ballads of this period dramatic, often tragic scenes from English history, and also heroic characters, especially Mary Queen of Scots.³⁵

A ballad from Scotch history which has enjoyed very great popularity is Fontane's "Archibald Douglas."³⁶ This poem is based on a note in Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*.³⁷

Fontane translated, especially during the period when he was a member of the Tunnel, a number of modern English poems.³⁸ On May 10, 1846, he read to the club his translation of a passage from the *Night Thoughts* by Young.³⁹ "Mel-

³⁴ Letter, Feb. 14, 1854. W, 2, X, 104.

³⁵ Cf. the ballad cycle "Maria Stuart."

³⁶ Read in the Tunnel on Dec. 3, 1854, receiving the highest award, viz., "acclamation."

³⁷ The source of this poem has occasioned considerable discussion by scholars. *Die Nation*, Berlin, 1898, No. 4, published a letter from Fontane stating that the ballad dated from the year 1853 and was inspired by a passage in Scott's *Tales of a Grandfather*. However, *Daheim*, 44, 10, contained a letter from Fontane, dated 1896, saying that the source of "Archibald Douglas" was a note to a poem of Scott which he had found in a poor translation. In the *Vossische Zeitung*, Beil., 1914, N. 2. H. Rhyn gives as the source of the poem Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*. *Ibid.*, N. 29, 1914, H. Tardel shows that this book must have been the translation of the *Minstrelsy* published by Schumann Brothers in Zwickau, edited a number of times since 1823.

As a matter of fact the romantic story of Archibald Douglas is found, not in a note to a ballad, but in a note in the rather long introduction to the *Minstrelsy*, Vol. I, note to p. XXI. The same story also appears in the *Tales of a Grandfather* at the end of Chap. XXVI. *Miscellaneous Prose Works of Sir Walter Scott*, Vol. III.

³⁸ Among the ballads translated from the English there appear two versions from modern poets: "Charles Bawdins Tod und Begräbnis" from Chatterton and "John Gilpin" from Cowper, both found in J. S. Moore's *Pictorial Book of Ballads*, London, 1847.

³⁹ Record from Tunnel minutes, reprinted by Wegmann, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

rose Abbey" from the *Lay of the last Minstrel* and ten lines from *Marmion* represent his translations from Scott's poems in this period.⁴⁰ From Burns, a favorite with Fontane, the poet has translated "Bannockburn," several Jacobite songs⁴¹ and "Was kann ein jung Mädel, was soll ein Mädel."⁴² Another singer of humble origin in whom Fontane was greatly interested was the workingman-poet John Prince.⁴³ Fondness for the dramatic is shown in several of Fontane's translations, such as "Balaklava" ("Charge of the Light Brigade"), by Tennyson and "General Sir John Moores Begräbnis" by Charles Wolfe.

In his Tunnel period Fontane also produced, besides his ballads, several works in other genres based on English history. He began a tragedy *Karl Stuart*, the first act of which he read at a session of the Tunnel on October 21, 1849.⁴⁴ Already on October 4, 1846, *Karl Stuart, Fragment des Theaterstücks* had been read to the club. This is a soliloquy by Charles I on the night before his execution.⁴⁵ Fontane also planned a tragedy *Cromwell*, which likewise remained a fragment.⁴⁶ A part of the play, *Cromwell's Letzte Nacht*,

⁴⁰ Both these poems are found in *Jenseit des Tweed*, but only the first has been included in the final edition of the poems.

⁴¹ The originals of five out of these have been identified as from Burns.

⁴² The latter appears in *Jenseit des Tweed*, but not in the final edition of the poems.

⁴³ Mr. Friedrich Fontane has informed me that some of the translations of Prince's poems appeared in the first edition of Fontane's poems (1851). Zillmann,—*op. cit.*, note, p. 42,—names two of these poems: "Der Frühling an den Gefangenen" and "Eines Vaters Wehklage."

⁴⁴ An extract from this tragedy, which appears as a fragment in the first edition of Fontane's poems in 1851, is the "Puritanerpredigt," included in the later editions under "Englisch-Schottisches."

⁴⁵ Reprinted by Wissmann, *op. cit.*, p. 95, also by Wegmann, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

⁴⁶ A lengthy discussion of this play is found in a letter of Nov. 20, 1848, from Bernhard von Lepel to Fontane. *Bernhard von Lepel, Vierzig Jahre. Briefe an Theodor Fontane von 1843-1883*, S. 107 ff.

which appears later in the collection "Englisch-Schottisches," was read on the same day as *Karl Stuart*, October 4, 1846. In addition to these tragedies our author wrote a story *James Monmouth*, which treats of another member of the unfortunate Stuart family,⁴⁷ and a story *Wolsey*.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Published in the belletristic annual *Argo* for 1854, edited by Fontane and Franz Kugler. Songs from this story, now included among the poems under "Englisch-Schottisches," are "Die Stuarts," "Puritanerlied" and "Lied des James Monmouth."

⁴⁸ Cf. letter to Storm, Sept. 12, 1854. W, 2, X, 127. This is probably the work to which Mr. Friedrich Fontane referred when he informed me of the presence among Fontane's manuscripts of the fragment of a story, the scene of which is laid in 1529 in England.

CHAPTER II

THE JOURNALIST AND ENGLAND

Fontane's residence in England at the beginning of his literary career had a profound significance for his development as an author. It is doubtful whether any other experience would have been so salutary in giving the struggling author a knowledge of the world, a broad general culture, and clearness as to his own literary mission.

While still a volunteer in the Kaiser-Franz regiment, Fontane received in July, 1844, the opportunity to make his first visit to England. This piece of good luck he owed to the generosity of a friend, Hermann Scherz, who paid the expenses of a two weeks' excursion to the island kingdom. Fontane's knowledge of English was such that he was able to make himself a useful traveling companion. For himself the young apothecary profited greatly, since the fortnight spent in the island furnished an impulse which helped to direct his interest toward English poetry.¹

In April, 1852, Fontane went to England again, this time as an employee of the Prussian ministerial press to study English conditions. His articles during his stay were written especially for the ministerial organs, the *Preussische Zeitung* and *Zeit*. In September he returned home to take up his former position with the *Preussische Zeitung*,² with which he had begun a connection in the first year of his literary career in 1850.

¹ Cf. above, p. 4.

² Cf. letter, Feb. 16, 1853. W, 2, X, 58.

In September, 1855, the journalist returned to London as the representative of the ministerial press to establish a German-English correspondence bureau for the support of Prussian political interests, remaining until January, 1859, and only returning to Berlin for brief periods in 1856 and 1857. During his more than three years abroad Fontane contributed articles to the *Preussische Zeitung*, *Zeit*, *Kreuzzeitung*, *Vossische Zeitung*, *Deutsche Kunstblatt*, and other journals.³

It was the fall of the Manteuffel ministry, with which Fontane was connected, that finally caused his return to Berlin in 1859. However, he did not sever all connection with the ministerial press. Through the aid of a fellow-member of the Tunnel, Georg Hesekei, he joined the staff of the *Neue preussische (Kreuz-) Zeitung* in 1860, and edited the English articles. This position Fontane held for ten years.

Both periods in England had about the same influence on Fontane's development, although the first, as Wandrey points out,⁴ could not have had the permanent effect of the second, longer residence.

The splendor and massiveness of English civilization call forth Fontane's enthusiastic admiration during his first activity as journalist in England. After having been five days in London the poet exclaims: "The splendor of this spectacle has something immeasurably elevating; because one forgets himself entirely, one also forgets his misery and his distress and only feels elevated by the feeling that he is a part of this whole, a member of that great human family which lives thus and creates such things."⁵ Again, Fontane

³ W, 2, VI, 36, note.

⁴ *Theodor Fontane*, S. 28.

⁵ Letter, April 28, 1852. W, 2, VI, 10.

writes to his wife, June 14, 1854: "I should like to have shown you London; for although I have not been successful in any too many things here, I maintain now as before: it is the greatest thing which this earth has."⁶

As we see from a number of statements of Fontane, one of the most, if not the most beneficial effect of his residence in London was a schooling in experience. The journalist hoped to repair his early deficiencies in education by the opportunities to be obtained in London. As a matter of fact, the writer's education in the strict sense of the word, had been very scanty. In 1832 he attended the *gymnasium* in Neu-Ruppin, where his only interest was history⁷ and in 1833 he was sent to a Berlin technical school (*Gewerbeschule*), with the result that he obtained a smattering of a number of subjects, but a thorough knowledge of none. He was taken out of the Berlin school in 1836 to begin an apprenticeship at the Rose Apotheke. The poet felt later that he owed his education to life itself, and not to his school training. In this school of life the early English experiences played an important part. Thus Fontane writes soon after his return from his first stay in England that although he was not sorry to be back in Berlin, he would like to have stayed from two to five years longer. "For it is an incomparable school for everyone and particularly for me."⁸ He had hoped especially to make good his early deficiencies in education by a thorough knowledge of the English language, literature and national conditions. A number of remarks in letters and diary show the zeal with which the journalist sought to overcome the difficulties of the English language.

⁶ Unpublished letter, B. E. Trebein, *Theodor Fontane as a Critic of the Drama*, p. 5, note 2.

⁷ Cf. above, p. 2.

⁸ Letter, Oct. 18, 1852. W, 2, X, 51.

An important part of this practical education in England was formed by Fontane's study of Shakespeare as presented in the London theaters, a work which was to bear fruit in the feuilleton papers published in *Aus England*.⁹ The poet wrote to his wife, October 27, 1855: "I take a lively interest in the Shakespeare performances These evenings at the theater are the best thing that I have had up to the present."¹⁰

In spite of his enthusiasm for the variety of English life and his appreciation of the benefits to be obtained in England, the general tone of Fontane's London letters and diaries during both periods of his residence there is pessimistic and gloomy. Moreover, English customs and institutions receive a good share of adverse criticism. This attitude toward English life is to be explained partly by the uncertainty of Fontane's position in London, especially during his first stay in 1852. He does not seem to have received a fixed salary for his work at first, and he tried various expedients to enable himself to achieve financial independence of the ministerial press. Bunsen, the Prussian Ambassador in England, sought to obtain for the young journalist a professorship at Oxford or Cambridge,¹¹ and at one time Fontane even considered establishing himself as an apothecary in England.¹² Another factor tending to depress the journalist at this time was the lack of the stimulus of intimate family and social life which he had enjoyed at home.¹³

Under such conditions Fontane notices and remarks upon the lack of *Gemülichkeit* in English life. With all his admira-

⁹ Cf. below, p. 17.

¹⁰ Unpublished diary, Trebein, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

¹¹ Letter, June 21, 1852. W, 2, VI, 17.

¹² Letter, written probably at the beginning of Aug. 1852. W, 2, VI, 27.

¹³ Fontane's family, however, joined him in London during his second residence there, on July 27, 1857.

tion for the whole (*das Ganze*), he felt that the individual left much to be desired.¹⁴ "England is large, beautiful, elevating, but again also small, narrow and tiresome. The *outer* man has advanced further there, every sort of public effect flourishes and makes us seem mere bunglers. . . . But *inwardly* we are ahead of them and probably the *first* of all."¹⁵ Nevertheless the desire to make the most of his opportunities for rounding out his education made Fontane want to spend a considerable period of time in England and made him, as we have seen, loath to return to Berlin in the fall of 1852. He is firmly convinced that the apprenticeship which he felt he had to serve in England is absolutely necessary for his later life at home. It is the realization of this fact that rendered the disagreeable aspect of his London residence endurable.¹⁶ However after the collapse of the Manteuffel ministry he was glad to return home. Fontane felt that however much he loved London, he remained after all a stranger there.¹⁷

The author's experiences abroad, unpleasant though they were at times, gave him a deep insight into life. He looked upon his journalistic work even in Germany as of particular social value and as an antidote to the one-sidedness and the common German fault of over-estimating art at the expense of life, for in London he had life itself, no longer the mere description of it.¹⁸

Especially in his later years in England Fontane added greatly to his knowledge of mankind. With Julius Faucher, a former member of the Lenau Club, he inspected all grades

¹⁴ Letter, Oct. 18, 1852. W, 2, X, 51.

¹⁵ Letter to Wolfsohn, Nov. 16, 1852, in *Theodor Fontanes Briefwechsel mit Wilhelm Wolfsohn*, S. 102.

¹⁶ Letter, Sept. 18, 1857. W, 2, VI, 93.

¹⁷ W, 2, III, 140.

¹⁸ Letter, April 25, 1856. W, 2, X, 145.

of London life, from the haunts of criminals to a wedding of royalty. He also renewed his acquaintance with Max Müller and associated with a number of liberals who had left Germany in 1848. During his first summer in London the young author seems, as has been pointed out, to have had some idea of remaining in England, if fortune should favor him there;¹⁹ but in the course of his second residence abroad he came to the realization that his mission was to be fulfilled at home. He had developed the self-confidence and obtained the perspective over his career which became important influences in guiding him finally into the purely literary field. So when the Manteuffel ministry fell in 1859 Fontane had already become tired of the journalistic grind and was not sorry to give up his position in England. He writes to Merckel²⁰ that the London atmosphere is not favorable for creative work. Moreover, he preferred an independent existence to a safe, subaltern position with some ministry.²¹

The most valuable feuilleton papers which Fontane sent to various journals during his residence in England he collected and published in three books.²² The first of these volumes, *Ein Sommer in London*,²³ contains the poet's experiences and impressions gained in 1852. In 1860 there followed *Jenseit des Tweed, Bilder und Briefe aus Schottland 1858-59*,²⁴ containing a description of the trip Fontane made with his intimate friend Bernhard von Lepel in August, 1858.²⁵ These two books were finally brought together in

¹⁹ Cf. Fontane's letter to his father, July 1, 1852, published with his English diary for 1852 in the *Neue Rundschau*. 1914. Vol. XXV, Heft 10, Ss. 1385-1408.

²⁰ Feb. 18, 1858. Dr. Mario Krammer, *Theodor Fontanes engere Welt*, Ss. 26.

²¹ Letter, Nov. 6, 1858, W, 2, VI, 99.

²² It is significant that no political feuilleton was considered worth reprinting.

²³ 1854, Katz, Dessau.

²⁴ Julius Springer, Berlin.

²⁵ Cf. letter, Sept. 17, 1858. W, 2, VI, 97.

one volume under the title *Aus England und Schottland*.²⁶ The third volume of essays from Fontane's English period includes papers written during the poet's last residence in England (1855-1859) and appearing in the *Beilagen* and feuilletons of various journals. This book was published in 1860 under the title *Aus England. Studien und Briefe über Londoner Theater, Kunst und Presse*.²⁷ The first part of the volume: "Die Londoner Theater, Insonderheit mit Rücksicht auf Shakespeare," is devoted to reports on the Shakespearian productions of the London stage. In these essays Fontane takes up English and German methods of producing Shakespeare. The second part of "*Aus England*" contains a discussion of English painters in connection with the Manchester Art Exhibition in 1857.²⁸ In the third part of the volume Fontane treats the London weeklies and dailies. The only essays in this book which have been deemed worthy of preservation are those on the London stage.²⁹

The collection of the feuilletons *Aus England und Schottland* we shall examine at some length. The papers on England give a fairly complete and final idea of Fontane's attitude toward English life, showing his admiration for one phase of it and his dislike of another. Moreover, in this collection we find features which appear as characteristics of the author's later works. Chief among these is Fontane's interest in psychology, which finds ample exercise in the poet's study of English traits and institutions. The papers included in the second group of essays in the volume *Aus England und Schottland*, which are entitled *Jenseit des Tweed*, are impor-

²⁶ 1900, F. Fontane. W, 2, IV.

²⁷ Ebner and Seubert, Stuttgart.

²⁸ Cf. W, 2, VI, 91, note.

²⁹ These papers have been published in one volume with the *Critische Causerien*. W, 2, VIII. For a discussion of the feuilletons on English painting and press cf. Wandrey, *op. cit.*, p. 74 f.

tant since they exhibit the author's enthusiasm for Walter Scott and the romantic past of Scotland. In addition, they explain the origin of the *Wanderungen durch die Mark Brandenburg*, the poet's first important literary work, the studies for which he was to begin the year of his return to Germany.

The first group of articles, *Ein Sommer in London*, belongs, as has been pointed out, to the poet's first stay in England. In spite of the realistic accuracy and vividness of the descriptions in these papers, the subject-matter is always presented as it appeared to the selective eye of an artist, and Fontane described only what he found interesting. The papers differ greatly in length, and their content is as varied as the treatment, which extends from circumstantial description in such chapters as the "Die Kunst-Ausstellung" to a lyric effusion in "Das Leben ein Sturm." In many of the articles in *Ein Sommer in London* there is a free and easy mingling of the subjective and the objective which would suggest the title *Stimmungsbilder*. Even as early as this the poet displays his talent for delightful chatting (*Plaudern*). Other evidences of the later writer are found in the frequent historical excursions; and the gossipy, anecdotal treatment of the past betray the future author of the *Wanderungen durch die Mark Brandenburg*.

A number of the feuilletons in *Ein Sommer in London* deal with monuments, public buildings and works of art. The author is impressed by the massiveness (*Massenhaftigkeit*) and the solidity of English life. Noteworthy is his interest in the great Thames bridges. If he were asked to show a stranger the point most characteristic of city and country, he would direct him to these structures: "These bridges are in my opinion by far the most significant things which London has to exhibit in the way of structures. I believe that I have found the reason for this peculiar phe-

nomenon in the fact that the English people possess everything which suffices for an imposing edifice,—calculation, riches, endurance, boldness,—but lack that which is necessary for the creation of the artistically perfect: taste and beauty.”³⁰

In Westminster Abbey³¹ the poet's eye and imagination are caught by the effigies of the rival queens, Mary Stuart and Elizabeth. These two attract him again in the Hampton-Court picture gallery.³² In describing the Tower³³ and the romantic-gruesome history of its celebrated occupants the balladist is on congenial ground. In Smithfield³⁴ the picturesque past is preferred to the prosaic present. The fact that this town was the home of the notorious Emma Lyons, gives Fontane an excuse for sketching the career of the adventuress. This mode of sketching biography is very common in the *Wanderungen*.

It is significant that Fontane devoted his last memorable day in England to a visit to the battlefield of Hastings, which had occupied his imagination in boyhood. The England of daring and chivalry is far more congenial to the poet than the modern industrial country. Looking back on the receding cliffs of Dover, he exclaims: “The paddle wheels revolved more quickly, the spray dashed higher, the wind blew more icily—the last light was extinguished—night and sea round about; behind me lay old England and this day.”³⁵

A number of chapters in *Ein Sommer in London* are devoted to descriptions of English manners and customs. Psychological analysis Fontane applied in his imaginative as

³⁰ P. 32.

³¹ “The Poet's Corner.”

³² “Ein Picknick in Hampton Court.”

³³ “Der Tower.”

³⁴ “Smithfield.”

³⁵ P. 227.

well as in his autobiographical and travel works. The poet was always studying people as types or as members of races or nations.³⁶ Consequently we seldom find in these feuilletons a chapter in which Fontane does not present the scenes and phenomena observed as a manifestation of national traits. The paper "English Pedantry" ("Der englische Zopf"), gives a picture of intimate domestic life, illustrating the existence of pretentious manners, even among plain people. In the chapter "Richmond" the poet observes during a Sunday trip on the Thames his fellow voyagers, a genuine middle-class English family. At another time³⁷ Fontane himself is one of a party of picnickers and he sketches his acquaintances, with their peculiarities and foibles, with a delicacy and charm suggestive of similar scenes in his realistic novels. In another chapter³⁸ a graphic description of an election in the country shows the poet's lack of sympathy with such manifestations of popular sovereignty as the heckling of speakers and the vulgarity of the crowd.

In *Ein Sommer in London* Fontane gives illuminating flash-lights rather than a systematic presentation of English life. As a keen observer, he neglects no detail of life, however small, which came under his notice, providing it seemed to him typical or symptomatic. Now it is street bagpiper-minstrels which attract his attention,³⁹ now the variegated sights of London as seen from an omnibus,⁴⁰ now a cricket match between crippled veterans, heroes of Trafalgar and Aboukir.⁴¹ Dramatically Fontane describes how even the

³⁶ When a prisoner in France,—cf. *Kriegsgefangen*. W, 2, V, 112,—the poet trotted out his hobbies to while away the time. Among these was the study of national psychology.

³⁷ "Ein Picknick in Hampton Court."

³⁸ "Die Middlesex-Wahl."

³⁹ "Die Musikmacher."

⁴⁰ "Von Hydepark-Corner bis London Bridge."

⁴¹ "Alte Helden, neue Siege."

dregs of London in a sailor resort respond to the patriotic call: "That is the marrow of this people, national down to the sailor's wench. Such power can be humbled, but not broken; every defeat must be followed by a rise."⁴²

Some papers in this collection are wholly or mainly theoretical—the author pauses to reflect on what he has observed. Fontane believes that the "yellow fever of money" has poisoned the system of the giant England: "Speculations, racing and the chase after money, arrogance, when this has been gained (*erjagt*) and veneration of the one who has gained it,—the whole cult of the golden calf is the great disease of the English people."⁴³ Indeed, Fontane looks upon Mid-Victorian England with Thackeray's eyes and finds snobbishness and the mania for display (*Repräsentationsgelüst*) rampant everywhere.⁴⁴

Political democracy meant little to Fontane, who was an essentially unpolitical nature, *social* democracy he missed entirely in England. Here the contrast of English with German conditions is inevitable: "The German lives in order to live, the Englishman lives in order to make a display. In Germany one lives happily when one lives comfortably (*behaglich*); in England, when one is envied."⁴⁵ The talk about freedom and equality is nowhere less a phrase than with us. We have no political democracy. We have classes, but no English-Chinese caste spirit; we have barriers but no chasm."⁴⁶ In Germany, the poet continues, it is a common culture which forms the invisible bond unit-

⁴² P. 111.

⁴³ P. 90.

⁴⁴ The author refers to an incident mentioned in *Vanity Fair* to support his contention, p. 213.

⁴⁵ P. 209.

⁴⁶ P. 213 f.

ing all classes. As Wandrey says,⁴⁷ this criticism, in spite of its harshness, does not seem to be inspired by prejudice, because Fontane does not set out to find flaws. The poet was convinced of England's greatness and again and again conquered by its magic charm.

In *Ein Sommer in England* a wide variety of subjects is treated, as the emphasis is laid on man and on the present. In *Jenseit des Tweed*, on the other hand, it is the past which occupies the foreground of the author's picture of the north. Most of the papers of this collection deal with historical monuments or with pilgrimages through town and country to places hallowed by history and legend.

Even in modern Scotland⁴⁸ Fontane felt himself immediately in a more congenial atmosphere than in England. In this primitive, relatively backward nation the poet was more at home, for conditions here approximated those of his native country. The same seems to hold true of the Scotch character. As soon as the traveler crossed the Tweed he became conscious of this welcome difference. After he had obtained his first glimpse of the sights of Edinburgh he wrote: "Every evening, when the mists begin to take on a darker hue and the gray-black stone wall of the houses gradually blends with the gray-black mists, lights suddenly gleam forth from this chaos and becoming ever brighter, more numerous, they finally gleam through the shroud (*Hülle*), woven of night and mist. This again separates from its dark background and hovers like a transparent veil about the houses, which are growing blacker and blacker. When then the horn-signals sound down from the castle through the hushed night, a feeling steals over us that the whole is a magic creation,

⁴⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 72.

⁴⁸ Fontane admits that he knew little of the achievements of modern economic Scotland. Cf. W. 2, IV, 323.

which a sound called into existence and which must vanish as soon as the last tone dies out."⁴⁹ The poet could well have placed these words at the beginning of *Jenseit des Tweed* as a motto for these feuilletons. The brightness and reality of the present are gradually obliterated by the darkness and mists of olden times, until finally the rays of legend and poem dispel the murkiness by their enchanted light.

If there are numerous historical and anecdotal excursions in *Ein Sommer in London*, *Jenseit des Tweed* fairly bristles with them. Here too the literary allusions are commoner. Scott and Burns are quoted several times in translation,⁵⁰ and Fontane also includes his version of several old Scotch ballads.⁵¹ It must be remembered that while the poet was abroad his interest in the ballad from English and Scotch history ran parallel to his journalistic work. Fontane's interest in Mary Stuart, manifested even on his first brief trip to England in 1844, finds ample fuel in Scotland. The poet visits Linlithgow, where Mary was born, Holyrood palace, where she lived, and Lochleven castle, where she was a prisoner. He is of course at home in the stories of the human moths who were scorched by her flame. The name Douglas also has an enchanting sound for Fontane.⁵² In Edinburgh he finds an opportunity to relate the story of "Cleanse the Causeway," the feud between the Douglasses and the Hamiltons, also anecdotes of Archibald Douglas, called "Bell the Cat." Again, in Sterling Castle it is Lord William Douglas who gives rise to an historical sketch, while

⁴⁹ *Jenseit des Tweed*, S. 243.

⁵⁰ Cf. above, p. 8.

⁵¹ Part of "Sir Patrick Spens," "Die Schuster von Selkirk," the first strophes of "Thomas der Reimer" and "The Flowers of the Forest."

⁵² Note the number of poems by Fontane celebrating members of this family.

in Melrose Abbey it is the grave of James Douglas which leads the poet to narrate the ballad of "Chevy Chase."⁵³

But it is really the magic name of Walter Scott which gives unity and coherence to *Jenseit des Tweed*. Thoroughly familiar as he is with the great author, Fontane is able to let him "do the honors for all Scotland." A hall in Holyrood Palace where the Young Pretender, Charles Stuart, once gave a ball reminds the poet of figures in *Waverley*. The site of the old Tolbooth prison in Edinburgh evokes an allusion to the *Heart of Midlothian*. In examining Lochleven Castle, Fontane recalls that Scott in his *Abbot* used the cellar as a smithy. How familiar the German author was with Scotch legends may be inferred from the fact that he was able to add items to his cicerone's knowledge of the ballad-lore connected with Lochleven.

In fact, the poet's extensive knowledge of at least the more romantic side of Scotch history is shown everywhere in *Jenseit des Tweed*, especially when his route leads him to battlefields.⁵⁴ A number of pages are devoted to the romantic, semi-legendary events leading up to the battle of Flodden Field, which Scott treated in *Marmion*.

Even the topography of the country suggests Scott. The Trossachs are the land of the *Lady of the Lake*, of which Fontane gives a detailed analysis. The tourist in Perth is reminded of a novel of Scott: "What would the world know of Perth, if that book of Sir Walter's had remained unwritten."⁵⁵

In dealing with Edinburgh's ghost-haunted houses, Scott's passion for ghost stories is recalled and an anecdote illus-

⁵³ Translated by Fontane from Percy's *Reliques of Ancient Poetry*. Cf. above, p. 7.

⁵⁴ Cf. the papers: "Flodden-Field," "Culloden-Moor" and "Stirling Castle."

⁵⁵ P. 391 f.

trating Sir Walter's attitude toward the supernatural recounted.⁵⁶

It is fitting that the last paper in *Jenseit des Tweed* should be devoted to a pilgrimage to Abbotsford. Although the peculiar taste exhibited in this architectural medley, the "romance in stone and mortar," inspired Fontane with no enthusiasm, he could not help prizing highly this experience. "The trip to Abbotsford was a pilgrimage, a duty fulfilled, an expedition to which the heart urged. What would be the fame of Scotland without the phenomenon of Walter Scott! He has collected the poems of his country and made its history immortal by poems of his own. Abbotsford remains the place where the "magic tree of romanticism put forth its most beautiful and above all its most wholesome blossoms."⁵⁷

On his trip up the Forth from Edinburgh to Stirling the eye of the traveler falls everywhere upon historical ground, and great names are conjured up from the past: Morton, Moray, Bruce, Stuart, etc. This reminds Fontane of the historical associations of the country at home watered by the Havel. This section of the Mark too has produced great men: its Zietens, Knesebecks and Humboldts—the backbone of the Prussian state.⁵⁸ Years after, the author recalled the suggestive power of the Scottish tour. In his preface to the first edition of the first volume of the *Wanderungen durch die Mark Brandenburg* he writes: "Foreign lands first teach us what we possess in our home. I have learned that in my one case, and the first incentive to these *Wanderungen durch die Mark Brandenburg* came to me while roaming abroad."⁵⁹ Further suggestions came with the visit to Lochleven Castle,

⁵⁶ "Spukhäuser."

⁵⁷ P. 521.

⁵⁸ P. 351 f.

⁵⁹ P. V.

with its reminiscences of Queen Mary's imprisonment and romantic escape. Here the poet's imagination is suddenly kindled by the recollection of a day at home on the Rheinsberg Lake, which also had its castle and its historical associations. "Such was the picture of the Rheinsberg Castle, which hovered like a *fata morgana* over Lake Leven, and before our boat ran on to the sand of the shore, the question confronted me: 'Beautiful as was the picture which Lake Leven with its island and its Douglas castle unrolled before you, was that day less beautiful when you went over the Rheinsberg Lake in a rowboat, the creations and the memories of a great time about you?' and I answered, 'no.'"⁶⁰

Thus the journey in Scotland forms an important link in the chain of Fontane's literary activity. For, as will be evident in the next chapter, the *Wanderungen durch die Mark Brandenburg*, the studies for which he began as early as 1859, lead naturally to his first novel, *Vor dem Sturm*. If the valuable experiences of his London residence had given Fontane self-confidence and self-knowledge and consequent dissatisfaction with his more or less mechanical occupation, the Scotch trip in 1858 pointed the way clearly to literary work at home.

The year after his return home from England Fontane gave a series of lectures on English and Scotch literature, art and institutions. The subjects of the addresses, as given in a letter to Wolfsohn,⁶¹ are: (1) Whigs and Tories, (2) Englische Presse und Times, (3) Englische Historienmalerei, (4) Tennyson und Longfellow, (5) Oxford und englische Universitäten, (6) Hochland und die Hochländer, (7) Englisch-Schottische Volkspoesie.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. VII.

⁶¹ Dec. 8, 1859. *Theodor Fontanes Briefwechsel mit Wilhelm Wolfsohn*, S. 126.

CHAPTER III

FONTANE'S CONCEPTION OF THE HISTORICAL NOVEL, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO SCOTT

The influence of Scott in Germany in the nineteenth century was greater than that of any other foreign writer.¹ In 1815 translations of the Waverley Novels begin to appear and from 1820 to 1830 Scott is by far the most brilliant star in the literary firmament. Imitations soon make their appearance. In 1823 Alexis passes off *Walladmor*, in 1827 *Schloss Avalon* as free translations of the author of *Waverley*. In 1826 Tieck's *Aufbruch in den Cevennen*, Spindler's *Bastard*, Zschokke's *Adrich im Moos* and Hauff's *Lichtenstein*, were published, all definitely in Scott's manner.²

It is the combination of romanticism, realism and *Heimatkunst* that made Scott so popular in Germany, but it is as the realistic portrayer of the customs and variegated types of his countrymen that the novelist had the most beneficent influence on serious writers. This is the phase of Scott's activity that Julian Schmidt, a warm advocate of English literature, especially of Scott, commended to Germans. Mielke writes of Scott: "He sought his models . . . not in the higher social spheres, where the forms of society (*Sitte*) take the place of naturalness and where the law of prudence and good manners subdues passions. He studied life and human character rather

¹ Julian Schmidt, *Bilder aus dem geistigen Leben unserer Zeit*. Vol. I, S. 149.

² *Ibid.*, p. 237.

among the lower classes of his home: the farmers and peasants with their rough, wholesome joyousness, their humorous peculiarities, their hot-headed pugnacity. Those are his models and they themselves he has depicted perhaps most happily."³

Schmidt divides the Waverley Novels into two classes: (1) those based on the study of history, of the type of *Ivanhoe* (1819), (2) those based on oral tradition and observation, of the type of *Guy Mannering* (1815). Scott's popularity on the continent begins with the first class.⁴

It was easy for the many hack writers who followed Scott to copy the externals of their master's technique: archaisms, bizarre costumes, mysterious characters, romantic adventures, etc.⁵ Unlike these *Vielschreiber*, however, the serious followers of Scott in Germany usually possessed a national basis. Hauff turns to Württemberg history in *Lichtenstein*; H. Zschokke, to Swiss history in *Addrich im Moos*; and Alexis, to the past of the Mark Brandenburg in his *Vaterländische Romane*.⁶

In preparing to discuss Fontane as a follower of Scott, we must first consider the relationship of his predecessor Alexis to the British master. Alexis, in contradistinction to the other imitators of Scott in Germany, profited from the total conception (*Gesammtauffassung*) of his work, and not merely from certain points in his historical technique. He felt that Scott's aim was to give an heroic biography of Scotland. Thus Alexis in a series of novels develops an heroic history of Prussia.⁷ Moreover, Alexis has learned a realistic style from Scott's

³ Mielke, *Der deutsche Roman*, S. 61.

⁴ J. Schmidt, *op. cit.*, p. 226.

⁵ At the same time, it must be remembered that Scott, unlike the average German romanticist usually preserved an objective attitude toward even his more conventional romantic machinery.

⁶ Mielke, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

⁷ R. M. Meyer, *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur*. Bd. II, S. 160.

realistic peasants. Of all the followers of Scott in Germany it was he who profited most from the enduring virtues of his master. He sketches for us with greater realism of detail the topography of the country which he makes the scene of his novels and he explains modern conditions as the outgrowth of earlier ones which he describes. Besides, the viewpoint in his novels is modern.⁸

Julian Schmidt puts his finger on the reason why Alexis with all his excellencies has not enjoyed greater popularity in Germany. "Wilibald Alexis lacks but little of assuming for his native country, Prussia, the place of a W. Scott, but this little is to be sure decisive. The Romantic School, especially Hoffmann, had a decisive influence on his training as a youth. His stories contain fantastic, often grotesque figures and uncanny situations, mixed with long conversations about art and literature."⁹

This opinion should be supplemented by Fontane's words at the end of his essay on Alexis: "Wilibald Alexis in his whole aspect: in his mixture of realism and romanticism, in the detail of his research, in the intricacy of his investigations, in the endlessness of his dialogues (witty as they are), *could* not and will not be popular. The awkwardness of his style,—which some would like to glorify as 'ruggedness of character,'—speaks the final decisive word and sets the seal of certainty upon his non-popular nature."¹⁰

Having completed the review of Alexis as a follower of Scott, we will consider briefly how Fontane observed the Scott tradition as a poet of the Mark Brandenburg. In this respect there is a certain justification in associating Alexis and Fon-

⁸ Julian Schmidt in the *Grenzboten*. III, 487.

⁹ Julian Schmidt, *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur im 19. Jahrhundert*. Bd. III, 253 f. This reference and that in note eight are cited by Price, *op. cit.*, p. 502.

¹⁰ W, 2, IX, 218. However, Fontane was an ardent admirer of Alexis.

tane and in calling the latter a follower of the former. Both poets treated almost exclusively subject-matter drawn from life in Berlin and the Mark Brandenburg. Both cultivated the novel and the ballad and both began by imitating old English poems.¹¹ Nevertheless there are striking and fundamental differences between the two novelists. Whereas Alexis follows the history of Prussia down through the centuries in his *Vaterländische Romane*, Fontane wrote only two historical novels, *Vor dem Sturm* and *Schach von Wuthenow*, both dealing with the Napoleonic era. However, if we add to these two novels Fontane's patriotic historical ballads and his *Wanderungen durch die Mark Brandenburg*, the sum total exhibits a spirit of devotion to the history of the Mark Brandenburg comparable with that found in Alexis' series of novels. Fontane depicts in his ballads many dramatic scenes from Prussian history. As Zillmann says: "From the early Middle Ages on down into the new empire until the turn of the century the poet's song accompanies the great events of his native country, and so too the composition of these poems extends over about half a century."¹² In the *Wanderungen durch die Mark Brandenburg* Fontane likewise finds many opportunities to do what Alexis does in his patriotic novels, viz., to familiarize the natives of Brandenburg with the history of their country.¹³

In spite of the activity of Alexis and Fontane as poets of the Mark Brandenburg, Tschirch believes that we have no right to designate Fontane simply a pupil of Alexis: ". . . however little we can deny the influence which the precedence of

¹¹ Tschirch, *op. cit.*, p. 224.

¹² *Op. cit.*, p. 60.

¹³ It is in the *Wanderungen* too that we find another point of contact between Alexis and Fontane, viz., in depicting the scenic beauties of the country. Fontane is "a Columbus of the landscape of the Mark, the prophet of which was Alexis." R. M. Meyer, *op. cit.*, Bd. II, S. 392.

the first specifically *märkisch* author must have had on Fontane, the latter has himself declared that he never came into close contact with Häring and that he acquired (a more intimate) acquaintance with his works only in his later years."¹⁴

From Fontane's criticism of the novel contained in a number of articles, some of which have been brought together in the posthumous volume *Aus dem Nachlass* under the title "Literarische Studien und Eindrücke,"¹⁵ we can form a fairly complete idea of the poet's attitude toward Scott the novelist. It is surprising to note how many times the name of Scott is invoked to prove or illustrate some point which the writer wishes to make. In the essay on Alexis, our author compares certain aspects of the work of Alexis and Scott, usually giving preference to the art of the British writer. Of the two, Scott is the richer personality. "As it is written in a Scotch proverb: 'a king's face shall give grace', so too Sir Walter gave happiness and favor wherever he looked . . . he bore a cornucopia, inexhaustible, because his love, his rich talent and the happiness which is always with the good and the cheerful filled it ever anew."¹⁶ In the treatment of history Fontane recognizes Scott as the more artistic, freer writer: "He knew every moment that he was not a historian (*Historiker*), but only a story-teller (*Geschichtenerzähler*)."¹⁷ Furthermore, Scott was not oppressed by the weight of his subject-matter. "He was above things. Wilibald Alexis, not counting a few exceptions,

¹⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 224. This statement of Fontane regarding his relation to Alexis I have not been able to find in Fontane's writings. Hence it would seem to have been made to Tschirch orally.

¹⁵ W, 2, IX, 169-312. The long essay, "Wilibald Alexis" first appeared in 1873 in Julius Rodenberg's *Salon*. Vol. X. Heft 10-12. The other critiques, as far as they were published, appeared in the *Vossische Zeitung* in the seventies and eighties.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 213.

¹⁷ P. 215.

was always right in the midst of them."¹⁸ This dependence on his sources and this painful industry, Fontane notes, account for beauties in certain details of Alexis' novels, but also explain the lack of that sunshine that illuminates the historical parts of Scott's novels.

Fontane's theory regarding the period which a novel may portray likewise follows the practice in Scott's novels very closely. He finds it very characteristic that Scott began his Waverley series not with *Ivanhoe* (1196), a story of the Crusades, but with *Waverley* (1745), to which he purposely added the subtitle "Sixty years since." The critic believed that in Scott's best novels the action takes place within the eighteenth century or at its beginning.¹⁹ Hence Fontane's definition of the novel: "The novel should be a picture of the time to which we ourselves belong, at least the reflection of a life at the border of which we ourselves still stood or about which our parents related."²⁰

After considering in his essay on Alexis the treatment of history in the historical novel, Fontane takes up the romanticism of Scott and Alexis.²¹ Scott is an *Altromantiker*, Alexis a *Neuromantiker*. "The former adhered to the Scotch—English ballad, to the folksong, to the romances of the Middle Ages; the latter adhered to romanticism as Tieck and Hoffmann conceived and shaped it." Anything savoring of mysticism,

¹⁸ P. 215.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 238 ff. Essay, "Gustav Freytag, *Die Ahnen*." I–III, Published in the *Voss. Ztg. Beil.*, 1875. Nos. 7 and 8.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 242. Fontane concedes that it is possible to treat more remote ages in certain limited cases, viz., in (1) the dramatic novel, where the interest, as in the drama, is concentrated on the passions of a few figures. Examples of this class are the poet's own *Grete Minde* and *Ellernklipp*; (2) the romantic novel, since the world of fantasy does not change; (3) the historical novel in exceptional cases, viz., when we can consider the author as a posthumous (*nachgeboren*) son of preceding centuries.

²¹ P. 215.

vagueness or romantic irony was foreign to Fontane's nature. On the other hand romanticism in the broader sense of the word always formed an essential element in his work. If it is possible to find traces of German romanticism in *Vor dem Sturm*, it is very easy to discover the influence of the romanticism of Scott and the old ballads in several of Fontane's novels. The author's long occupation with the British ballad had strengthened this liking for the romantic. "I retired with Mary Stuart and arose with Archibald Douglas. The romantically fantastic (*Romantisch-Phantastische*) delighted me from youth on."²² In fact, as late as 1895 the poet planned the composition of a fantastic romantic novel. His reading of the Waverley Novels had naturally added fuel to this fire.

For Fontane, style was a very important consideration, with broad implications. He contrasts this point in Scott and Alexis. "One is easy and smooth, the other heavy and rugged; the dialogues of one resemble a sleigh ride over well-packed snow, the other the passage of a coach of state through the sand of the Mark."²³ Fontane expresses great admiration for the ease and charm of Scott's style, as shown particularly in the British author's introductions. Referring especially to the *Heart of Midlothian*, which he was reading at the time, he writes in 1868: ". . . the point in which the best fail, is given here with an ease and charm, with so much grace and humor that it replaces a chat with a beloved and witty person."²⁴ This is the highest praise that the *causeur* Fontane can give to the style of an author. In Fontane's estimation, the style of Gottfried Keller leaves much to be desired. A good writer, according to Fontane, does not thrust his own personality (as does Keller) between the reader and the object described, but on

²² Letter, April 15, 1891. W, 2, XI, 262.

²³ "Wilibald Alexis," S. 216.

²⁴ Letter, Aug. 28, 1868. W, 2, VI, 156.

the contrary, allows the object itself, as it were, to speak.”²⁵ This objectivity Fontane does find in Scott. In 1868, after having finished a reading of the *Heart of Midlothian*, the poet exclaims: “There extends throughout the whole novel, to pass over a hundred other merits, a gift for having people say what is natural, what is always correct, which, if we leave out Shakespeare and Goethe, no one else has. I find this the greatest.”²⁶ Thus Fontane ranks Jeanie Deans much higher than the heroine of *Hermann und Dorothea*. The former has the charm of depth of feeling (*Herzenstiefe*) and complete genuineness of expression, and unlike Goethe’s character, she may really have spoken as Scott has her speak.²⁷

The dialogues in Scott, of which Fontane shows such admiration, occupy a large and important place in the Waverley Novels. Among the Scottish novelist’s many highly original, realistic figures, especially from the lower classes,—gossips, pedants, servants, etc.,—each has a characteristic manner of expression. In view of Fontane’s outspoken admiration for Scott’s realistic manner it is reasonable to assume that in his period of apprenticeship he learned not a little from the dialogues of the author of *Waverley*. Indeed, with Fontane this is of great significance, for as years and practice bring maturity of style, it is precisely in the conversation of his characters that he becomes a virtuoso.

Another point in the Waverley Novels which Fontane extolls is their humour. This he regards as a natural expression of the personality of the author, who is the *Grosshumorist*, because he was himself great and free and occupied an exalted

²⁵ “Otto Brahms’ *Gottfried Keller*.” W, 2, IX, 255 ff. Published in Voss. *Ztg.* Beil. 1883. No. 14.

²⁶ Letter, Sept. 2, 1868.

²⁷ “Hermann und Dorothea,” an essay unpublished during Fontane’s lifetime, written in the middle of the seventies. W, 2, IX, 220.

position in life. Alexis, being no Olympian, could lay claim only to *Klein humor*. "Humor has a necessary preliminary condition, the supremacy over, the supremely sovereign play with the phenomena of this life upon which it looks down."²⁸

Let us now observe how far Fontane has applied these theories of novelistic technique in his long historical novel *Vor dem Sturm*, and how far he has approached Scott in the treatment of his subject-matter.

This first effort in fiction the author carried in his mind some years before he began to write. In 1866 he claims that he had the subject in mind for ten years.²⁹ This would date the conception of the work during the poet's last residence in England, at a time when he was very much under British influence.

In reviewing points of technique in *Vor dem Sturm*, Fontane writes to his publisher giving a broad characterization of the plan of the novel. He is not concerned with the rules which his work is to follow. "Rather I have undertaken to create the work entirely according to my own ideas, (*ganz nach mir selbst*), according to my opinion and individuality, without any model; even the indebtedness to Scott concerns only very general points. . . . Without murder and fire and great stories of passion, I have simply set out to present a great number of figures in the Mark . . . from the winter of 1812-1813. . . . I was not concerned with conflicts, but with the description of how the great emotion, born at that time, found and affected men of the most different kinds."³⁰

Of the eighty-two chapters of *Vor dem Sturm* but few develop any action or plot. The first part of the novel, which deals with Hohen-Vietz, contains only description,—portraits

²⁸ "Wilibald Alexis," S. 217.

²⁹ Letter, Aug. 11, 1866. W, 2, X, 252. According to a letter of Feb. 11, 1896, W, 2, XI, 371, the first chapters were written in the winter of 1863-64.

³⁰ Letter, June 17, 1866. W, 2, X, 246.

of Berndt von Vitzewitz, his household and characteristic figures in the village. Then the scene is shifted to the neighboring Guse, the residence of Berndt's sister Amélie, and we are introduced in the same way to the countess and her friends.³¹ The presence of Lewin in Hohen-Vietz, whither he has come for the Christmas holidays, gives a certain unity to the first part of the novel. With the hero's return to Berlin, where he is living as a student, the second part begins. Here the central action is advanced in spite of numerous episodes and digressions, and Lewin's love story is developed. In the last part of the novel, the political plot, the popular uprising against the French, staged by Berndt, developed in conversation in earlier parts of the story, is ended by the unsuccessful attack on the French garrison in Frankfort on the Oder. At the same time Lewin, cured of his love for his cousin by chastening experiences, marries his old playmate.

This review of the meager plot shows that in accordance with his plan the author places the emphasis in his first novel on character-drawing. He has given a large gallery of portraits ranging all the way from shepherd boy to prince, and including a sturdy *Junker*, a cynical-original general, a pious Moravian housekeeper, a witch-like hag, peasants and tradespeople, clergymen and poets.³²

In order to characterize the work accurately, the author originally wished to give *Vor dem Sturm* the subtitle *Zeit- und Sittenbild aus dem Winter 1812-13*, but his publisher demurred, and Fontane then substituted *Roman aus dem Winter 1812 auf 1813*. The novelist wished to present the patriotic enthusiasm awakening among the Germans at that time. Therefore he

³¹ To be sure Chaps. XXIX, XXXI, XXXII and XXXIV contain action, but it is of an episodic nature, dealing with the depredations of bandits, and does not really advance the movement of the story.

³² Fontane uses the term *Porträtgalerie* in Chap. XX to characterize his method of describing the friends of Countess Pudagla.

objected to Heyse's statement that the center of gravity in his novel was in the descriptive parts of the work and asserted that if his book was to be successful, the success would be due to certain chapters in which the political and patriotic predominated.³³ But Fontane's own words cannot change the fact that the center of gravity of the book is far from the political parts. Even in the chapters mentioned, as Wandrey points out,³⁴ we are given a dialogue which revolves around the distress of the time rather than direct accounts of the distress itself. Only the few chapters at the end of the novel, devoted to the Frankfort military engagement, contain strictly historical action. But these too really serve for character portrayal.³⁵

Important historical figures do not appear as actors in *Vor dem Sturm*, though they usually occupy the center of episode or anecdote.³⁶ Moreover, Fontane takes the knowledge of eminent historical events and persons for granted.

Vor dem Sturm consists to a large extent of a number of "interiors" of the time as a background for portraits. In Hohen-Vietz we are taken to the manor-house, the church, the inn, the parsonage, the magistrate's home, etc. In Berlin we overhear citizens discussing politics at a resort, we attend a lecture by Fichte, a meeting of Lewin's literary society, etc. Thus, while the specifically political is not treated as an end in

³³ Letter, Dec. 1, 1878.

³⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 119.

³⁵ "Die Überrumpelung der französischen Garnison, die Frankfurt besetzt hält, wird als einzige kriegerische Aktion vorgeführt. Aber das Interesse an den Menschen ist durch die immer wachsende Bedeutung, die ihnen im Gefüge des Romans zukommt, schon zu stark geworden, ihre innere Abrundung drängt zu sehr zum Abschluss, als dass auch nur dieser dritte Teil im Sinne einer Schilderung des überpersönlichen zeitgenössischen Fühlens in Anspruch genommen werden könnte, die vom ganzen Werk irrtümlich ausgesagt wurde"—Wandrey, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

³⁶ Gottfried Krickler, *Theodor Fontane. Von seiner Art und epischen Technik*, S. 91.

itself, the spirit and the atmosphere of the time, whether registered in conversation, genre scene or episode are very accurately caught and presented.

In the broad outlines of technique *Vor dem Sturm* reminds one less of the Waverley Novels than of Alexis' *Isegrimm* (1854). Fontane's treatment of his subject is closer to Alexis' broad epic sweep and to his peculiar, loose structure of genre scenes, episodes and anecdotes than to Scott's essentially dramatic technique. Furthermore, in both *Isegrimm* and *Vor dem Sturm* the central historical figure is drawn from the same source, the memoirs of Ludwig von der Marwitz, and both novels treat the period of Prussia's degradation. In spite of these similarities, however, there are no such striking parallels in *Isegrimm* and *Vor dem Sturm* as will be pointed out for Fontane's novel and the Waverley Novels. Besides, it is significant that Fontane, while noting a common source for the central historical figure in *Isegrimm* and *Vor dem Sturm*, and confessing to great admiration for *Isegrimm*, nowhere refers to any dependence on Alexis.³⁷

Two points in the general technique of *Vor dem Sturm* suggest the influence of Scott in the novel. In the first place, Lewin bears considerable resemblance to Scott's passive heroes. He does not act so much as he is acted upon.³⁸ In the second place, *Vor dem Sturm* contains a slight, though definite action, consisting of a love plot and a political plot, an action which gains in dramatic swiftness with the approach of the end of the novel. Compare this procedure with that in *Waverley*, in which Scott likens the rapidity of his narrative to a stone rolling down hill.³⁹ This conventional plot, which will be examined in the next chapter, is quite unlike that found in Fontane's later novels.

³⁷ Letter, April 24, 1880. W, 2, XI, 6.

³⁸ Scott introduces in most of his novels a hero who is conventional and colorless and designed to reflect the influence of the historical events.

³⁹ Chap. LXX.

CHAPTER IV

INFLUENCES OF THE WAVERLEY NOVELS ON FONTANE'S *Vor dem Sturm*

I. WAVERLEY

An enthusiastic reference to *Waverley* in *Jenseit des Tweed* shows Fontane's admiration for Scott's first novel: "Here (viz., in Holyrood Palace), danced those figures which W. Scott in his *Waverley* has wrested from oblivion for centuries,—Fergus and Flora MacIvor, old Bradwardine and his charming daughter."¹ As will be evident in the following pages, in *Vor dem Sturm* the clearest, widest and most detailed influence of Scott flowed from *Waverley*. Other works of the British author, to be sure, are important in this respect, but their influence is confined to isolated features of Fontane's novels.

In the first place it is possible to write a formula which contains the outline of the plot of *Vor dem Sturm* and *Waverley*. The hero, a young, impressionable man of romantic bent, is captivated by the charms of a brilliant, worldly girl. A close relative of the latter (father and brother respectively) is an ambitious man, who encourages the match in order to strengthen his political position. After the hero has been rejected by his first love, he comes to realize his affection for the naive, domestic girl who has been fond of him for a long time, and whom he marries after his character has been seasoned by military experiences.

This correspondence in plot would alone perhaps not warrant the conclusion that *Waverley* had influenced the con-

¹ P. 250.

ception of *Vor dem Sturm*. But in addition to this, we find (besides other points of contact)² a more or less close similarity in the figures forming the quadrilateral of the plot. Lewin, Kathinka, Marie and Ladalinski in *Vor dem Sturm* correspond to Waverley, Flora, Rose and MacIvor respectively in *Waverley*.³

The heroes of the two novels are both men of similar character and temperament. Both Lewin von Vitzewitz and Edward Waverley are exalted, romantic dreamers, not men of action, and in one sense the purpose of each novel is the ripening of the hero through difficult experiences. This aim is emphasized more in *Waverley*, which has more the character of the *Entwicklungsroman*, than in *Vor dem Sturm*.

Both of the leading characters have developed literary tastes in their youth. At the beginning of the novel Lewin is living in Berlin and studying to be a jurist. He attends lectures by Savigny and Fichte, yet these duties cannot prevent him from following his inclination and he spends most of his time reading his favorite books—the works of the Romantic School, as well as Shakespeare and Percy. Waverley too is allowed to choose his own reading at Waverley-Honour, and his fondness for the heroic tales of his ancestors develops in him the taste for romantic literature. On leaving his uncle's house he even composes a poem, which is quoted. It is literature which forms the bond that draws Waverley to Rose Bradwardine as well as to Flora MacIvor. The latter has herself written poetry. At a tea given at the court of the Young Chevalier, Waverley reads *Romeo and Juliet* to the company.⁴

² Cf. below, p. 47 ff.

³ In comparing the characters and other similar features in Fontane and Scott we will take up first *Vor dem Sturm*, with which we have acquired some familiarity, and then proceed to the particular Waverley novel which is the German author's source for this work.

⁴ Chap. LIV.

Lewin looks upon his literary inclinations less as an elegant accomplishment or pastime in the manner of Waverley than as a serious interest. He is presented as the founder of a literary society and is often shown discussing contemporary literature. Here we doubtless have echoes of Fontane's own literary activity.

Both Lewin and Waverley make indifferent soldiers. Lewin is an essentially non-political and non-military nature.⁵ Hence he has not the bitter hatred of the French oppressors which characterizes his father, and he thinks that their allies should not be trapped when in distress. Again, when in Berlin he feels sympathy for the bedraggled French troops returning from Russia and guides them to their quarters. Lewin takes no important part in the rural uprising against the French which is organized by his father. Yet when the time comes, he plays his role bravely, leading one body of troops in the attack on the French garrison in Frankfort; and finally, when he returns from the wars with sabre cut on brow, his "soft aspect" is gone.

Waverley, upon leaving Waverley-Honour, goes to Scotland to receive military training. Here his absentmindedness often embarrasses him, and he is not sorry to seize the first opportunity to visit the Bradwardines. The young soldier remains away from his regiment so long that the charge of treason brought against him becomes serious. Therefore it is not surprising that Waverley can swing from the side of the king to that of the Young Chevalier with few qualms. His lack of interest in his military duties even after he has joined Charles Edward's standard is remarked upon by Flora. However, Waverley, like Lewin, fights bravely when thrust by fate

⁵ In this respect like Fontane, whose political views were always "somewhat wobbly." *Von Zwanzig bis Dreissig*. W, 2, III, 157, note.

into action, and he reaches the end of the novel stiffened and seasoned by military discipline.

Another characteristic growing out of each hero's impractical, dreamy temperament is his aversion to social life. Consequently the impressionable youth is particularly susceptible to social brilliance. But he can shine at times, especially under the eyes of his beloved.

Lewin's dislike of society displeases his aunt, who believes that he is too much devoted to literary ways (*Allüren*) for a nobleman. Besides, she is anxious to promote a match between Lewin and her wordly niece, Kathinka. For this purpose, she suggests that he see something of the world. Lewin is impressed by the social ease and experience of Kathinka, and while at the Ladalinski's soirée he is conscious of his own defects in this regard, contrasting himself with the favored suitor, Bninski.⁶ However, on special occasions, he can distinguish himself in society.⁷

Waverley in his youth spends much of his time alone. He is an omnivorous reader, but sports and society do not interest him. Hence he knows little of social accomplishments. When he is sixteen years old, his love of solitude disturbs his uncle, and this, together with his infatuation for the squire's daughter, leads his aunt to suggest that he too see something of the world. When Waverley has some scruples about joining the Stuart rebellion, it is the solicitation of the charming Chevalier which overcomes them. In the same way he is impressed by Flora MacIvor's ease and social poise, and he cannot maintain his *sang-froid* when she gives him the mitten in a covert way.⁸ However, Scott's hero can summon up a gambler's courage. At the ball just before the battle he succeeds

⁶ Chap. XLI.

⁷ Cf. Chap. L.

⁸ Chap. XLIII.

so well in showing his spirit that Flora, who before is described as disliking his shyness, is struck by his eloquence and vivacity.

As is to be expected in this rather conventional type of *Entwicklungsroman*, the fortune of each of the heroes must finally be crowned by solid domestic happiness. After being healed of a foolish passion, he realizes for what he has been destined. As his first love fails him, his eyes are opened to the charms and virtues of the naive girl of domestic tastes.

Kathinka Ladalinski, the hero's first love in *Vor dem Sturm*, corresponds closely to Flora MacIvor in *Waverley*. Kathinka and Flora represent each the marvellous and the exotic to the hero, whose romantic imagination they quickly captivate.

Kathinka Ladalinski is a Pole by nature as well as by birth: she is brilliant and vivacious and charms all with her social gifts. Hence her ridicule of sentimentality and domesticity. We learn that the Ladalinski home was broken up early and that the training of the children has been for society rather than for the domestic circle.⁹ With breathless attention the curious Renate and Marie listen to Kathinka's description of the Berlin court functions which she has attended.¹⁰ The latter is not so upright a character as Flora and she is not at pains to suppress coquettish behaviour with one man, even when looking forward to marriage with another.¹¹ She is a type well calculated to bewitch an inexperienced dreamer like Lewin.

The exotic and romantic strain in Flora MacIvor is furnished by her Celtic ancestry and French training. She is a Highland girl, who has spent her early years abroad. Her father, an exile in France, married a lady in that country and left two orphans, Flora and her brother Fergus, who were cared for by James Stuart and his wife. Hence the zeal of brother and

⁹ Chap. XXXII.

¹⁰ Chap. XXVI.

¹¹ Chaps. L and LI.

sister for the Jacobite cause. Flora is highly accomplished, and even after returning to her lonely Highland home, she devotes herself to Celtic poetry and music. Independent and versed in the ways of the world, Flora quickly gains an ascendancy over Waverley, whom she regards as an inexperienced youth.

The chapter "Kleiner Zirkel"¹² in *Vor dem Sturm*, bears considerable resemblance to the chapter "To one thing constant never"¹³ in *Waverley*. Both have the same purpose: the hero is given a hint which should clear up in his mind the attitude of his *inamorata* toward him.

At a small gathering at Ladalinski's, to which Kathinka invites Lewin, the conversation turns upon German *Treue*, which Bninski ridicules as often hypocritical. Whereupon Kathinka mockingly dubs Lewin minister to King *Trauring*, and as such well fitted to tell a story of the power attaching to hereditary rings. At a tea which is attended by many connected with the Chevalier's court, Waverley reads parts of *Romeo and Juliet* aloud. In the ensuing discussion of constancy Flora defends the transference of Romeo's affection from Rosalind to Juliet, and Romeo-Waverley, unlike the more infatuated Lewin, is wise enough to profit by the hint given.

Kathinka and Flora both vanish from the scene in the latter part of the novel. Kathinka, after her elopement with Count Bninski, takes up her residence abroad, while Flora upon the collapse of the Stuart rebellion and the execution of her brother, retires to a convent in France.

Marie Kniehase in *Vor dem Sturm* and Rose Bradwardine in *Waverley* are similar to one another in character and in their function in the plot. Both Marie and Rose have always lived quiet, secluded lives, neither has enjoyed the advantages of the arts which can be learned only in cities. Hence each has

¹² Chap. L.

¹³ Chap. LIV.

a natural timidity and each is seen to best advantage in domestic settings. Even if Marie and Rose had had the opportunity to cultivate the social graces they would scarcely have profited by life in larger circles (as do Kathinka and Flora), for they are not brilliant. With them *feeling* plays a greater role than *intellect*, and their virtues and tastes destine them for domestic life.

The attitude of each naive girl toward her hero is one of mute, rapt adoration, and with them love develops gradually and almost imperceptibly out of similarity of taste and unselfish admiration.

Marie is a better-drawn character, less shadowy and negative than Rose; and yet, as Hayens states,¹⁴ she is drawn largely by suggestion. She has fantasy, is winsome and can captivate a Tubal, an Othegraven and a Bamme. However, she is quiet, says little and is a good listener. Marie appears before us in an early chapter,¹⁵ when she joins the family circle about the Christmas tree at Hohen-Vietz. A few chapters later¹⁶ the young people from the manor-house, Marie, Lewin and Renate, are shown at an informal gathering at the parsonage. But it is only after his illness in Bohlsdorf, following the news of Kathinka's elopement, that Lewin is purged of his infatuation for his Polish cousin, and Marie's letter to his sister reveals the former's interest in him.¹⁷ Finally it is the battle of Frankfort which ripens and brings to a head the love of the pair.¹⁸

¹⁴ Theodor Fontane, p. 22.

¹⁵ Chap. VI.

¹⁶ Chaps. XII, XIII, XIV.

¹⁷ Chap. LVIII.

¹⁸ It must be admitted that the awakening of Lewin's love for Marie is not very well motivated. The love-motif, for such it really is,—cf. Keiter and Kellen, *Der Roman*, S. 128,—is connected with a mystic inscription on a grave in a country church in Bohlsdorf. Here the hero is first reminded of Marie, (cf. Chap. I), here he has his fateful illness and here he is married.

In Scott's novel it is association with Waverley in pursuing studies together at Tully-Veolan that awakens the tender sentiment in Rose Bradwardine.¹⁹ The sharp-witted Flora, however, perceives the true state of affairs before Rose herself is conscious of it. The latter is always solicitous of Waverley's welfare. She it is who engineers his deliverance from the English,²⁰ and detects his paleness when he is rebuffed by Flora at the ball.²¹ As in the case of Lewin, it is in the stress of the campaign that Waverley becomes conscious of his feelings toward Rose.

In each of the novels under consideration we have a similar contrast of female types. In both *Vor dem Sturm* and *Waverley* the hero meets the naive, less sophisticated girl first. However, as her simplicity and domesticity cannot arouse his imagination, he comes to regard her merely as a close friend or relative. Both Scott and Fontane are fond of bringing out the contrast between the two chief female figures, who, though of widely different temperaments, are in both novels intimate friends.

In *Vor dem Sturm* Kathinka as a Pole ridicules the solid and pedantic Othegraven, who is represented as incarnating the German virtue of *Treue*, contrasting him with Count Bninski who has the Polish virtues of passion and fantasy.²² In this scene Marie defends Othegraven. In *Waverley* there are similar contrasting discussions. Flora, anxious to have Waverley turn his affections to Rose, praises the latter's domestic virtues to him. Rose, she says, will live only for her husband.²³ In the same way Flora draws an enticing picture of domestic happi-

¹⁹ Chap. XIV.

²⁰ Chap. LXV.

²¹ Chap. XLIII.

²² Chap. XXXI.

²³ Chap. XXIII.

ness for Rose.²⁴ When the two girls are brought together at the court of the Chevalier, Flora acts as a teacher for her inexperienced friend. On one occasion Rose defends her idol, Waverley, against Flora's gentle ridicule of his dreaminess and lack of interest in his military duties.²⁴

Geheimrat Ladalinski resembles Fergus MacIvor, though not so much in character as in his function in the plot. They appear respectively as father and brother of the hero's first love, and each favors the marriage of the girl in order to strengthen his own political position.

Polish by birth, Ladalinski is yet a genuine Prussian by temperament, and has risen high in the service of the state and even abjured Catholicism. When forced to leave his native country, he burned his bridges behind him. He does not insist upon his daughter's marriage with Lewin, but merely forbids her to marry a Pole, Bninski. He has nothing against the latter personally, but only fears that his enemies will injure him if they hear that his daughter has married a man of strong Polish sympathies.

Fergus MacIvor is a less likeable character than Ladalinski. Heart and soul engaged in the rebellion of the Chevalier, he hopes to further his overweening personal ambitions by bringing a member of the powerful Waverley family to the Prince's standard. As he is anxious to be made an earl, he is highly displeased, first that his sister rejects Waverley's suit, and then that the latter's ardor cools.

Neither of the girls concerned, Kathinka or Flora, is guided by the advice given by her relative, but each acts according to her own inclinations. Kathinka elopes with Bninski and Flora refuses Waverley.

II. GUY MANNERING

The character of Hoppenmarieken in *Vor dem Sturm* owes much to Scott prototypes. In fact she is hardly conceivable

²⁴ Chap. LII.

without them. A similar mysterious, witch-like general-utility agent, who often holds the threads of the plot, appears in one form or another in a number of the Waverley Novels, most strikingly as Meg Merrilies in *Guy Mannering*, Edie Ochiltree in the *Antiquary* and Madge Murdockson in the *Heart of Midlothian*.

Hoppenmarieken is pictured as old and ugly, a mixture of dwarf and witch. She wears a red frieze dress, high boots and head-cloth and carries a long stick and a basket. The hag bears only a general, external resemblance to Scott's figures, viz., in her fantastic dress and staff. It is more than likely that the picturesque garb of some old Wendish women, of whom Fontane met many during his walks through the Mark Brandenburg, suggested certain details of Hoppenmarieken's costume and function as mail-carrier.²⁵ Fontane wrote Wolfsohn on November 10, 1847, of a mail-carrier in the town of Letschin in the Oderbruch: "The intellectual, hence the most important intercourse is maintained through an old woman, who, not unlike Norna in Scott's *Pirate*, throws a mail-bag every Saturday into the Apotheke and vanishes like a ghost in gruesome night."²⁶ This woman also wears boots like Hoppenmarieken. The editor of the letters, Wilhelm Wolters, thinks that this mail-carrier is the model for Hoppenmarieken.²⁷ It is possible that Fontane received some slight suggestions for Hoppenmarieken from the striking figure referred to in the *Pirate*,²⁸ the prophetess Norna, of Norse descent with magic powers.

However, Hoppenmarieken corresponds far more closely to Meg Merrilies in *Guy Mannering*. Both outcasts are protected

²⁵ Cf. the description of the descendants of Wends in the *Wanderungen durch die Mark Brandenburg*, pt. II, "Oderland," p. 33.

²⁶ Theodor Fontanes *Briefwechsel mit Wilhelm Wolfsohn*, S. 26.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 26, note.

²⁸ Mentioned more than once in the *Wanderungen durch die Mark Brandenburg*.

by the nobleman of the district. Hoppenmarieken, when she came, thirty years before the opening of the story, to Hohen-Vietz as a half-tramp, was favored by Berndt von Vitzewitz. In spite of the doubts of some, the latter allows her to live in a wild section, the "Forstacker," which resembles a gypsy camp. Moreover, he overlooks many of her misdemeanors.

Meg Merrilies in *Guy Mannering* is an old gypsy, belonging to a group of her race who live on the Laird of Ellangowan's estate in their "city of refuge." For years the good-natured Bertram has permitted these people to live on his lands.

Although generally surly and unapproachable, Hoppenmarieken evinces a particular fondness for Lewin, whom she has seen grow up. Looked upon with distrust by most as a suspicious character who lays cards, etc., Lewin alone regards her with sympathy as a picturesque relic of the Wendish world. After Lewin and Tubal rescue Hoppenmarieken from bandits, she gives expression to affection for the former,²⁹ and in a later chapter, when the dwarf-woman is proved to be a receiver of stolen goods, it is Lewin who effects her release.³⁰

In the same way Meg Merrilies early becomes attached to the young Laird of Ellangowan, and feels destined to watch over his career. At his birth she spins and tells his fortune,³¹ and a few years later she seeks out opportunities of seeing the boy. When she with the rest of her tribe are driven out from their homes by the Laird in a sudden access of political zeal, Meg prophesies evil to the house of Ellangowan. This arrives quickly when the heir is kidnapped.³²

Both Hoppenmarieken and Meg Merrilies in their role of

²⁹ Cf. Chap. XXIX.

³⁰ He recognizes her mental inferiority. Cf., the mental state of Meg Merrilies, Madge Murdockson (*Heart of Midlothian*), etc.

³¹ Chap. IV.

³² Chap. IX.

witches have an importance in promoting the fortunes of the hero, in whose interest they sacrifice their lives. When Lewin is imprisoned in the Küstrin fortress, after having been captured by the French, Hoppenmarieken is called upon to smuggle him a rope and a note, thus making possible his escape.³³ The rescuing party returning home find the aged woman dead in the snow. She is then given Christian burial.³⁴

In a much greater degree than Fontane's witch, Meg Merri-
lies is the power behind the scene in *Guy Mannering*. She unravels all the tangled threads of the plot and finally restores Bertram to his patrimony. In a striking scene she introduces the Laird to his kidnapper, but in so doing is shot by the latter.³⁵ She does not die, however, until she proves Bertram's right to Ellangowan. Meg, just as Hoppenmarieken, is given Christian burial.

Hoppenmarieken seems to owe something also to the character of Edie Ochiltree in the *Antiquary*. She is not merely a witch; like Scott's character she is a news-carrier and jester.

Hoppenmarieken as *Botenweib* is a purveyor of news. She is omnipresent, and the familiar footing on which she stands with the Küstrin garrison, who look upon her as a clown, enables her to approach Lewin's prison.³⁶ She takes liberties with her betters, calling Bamme "lütten General" and "General-ken."³⁷

Edie Ochiltree performs, to be sure, a function analogous to that of Meg in *Guy Mannering*. He is the outcast who pulls the wires and interests himself in the hero. Furthermore, as he is a licensed beggar ("king's bedesman"), news-carrier and

³³ Chap. LXXV.

³⁴ Chap. LXXX.

³⁵ Chapl LIV.

³⁶ Chap. LXXVI.

³⁷ Chap. LXXV.

wandering tinker, he is ubiquitous. Like Hoppenmarieken, he is independent and prefers his roving life to the settled existence offered him by Isabell Wardour for saving her and her father.³⁸ Another of Edie's distinguishing traits is his freedom of tongue which places him in the ranks of modern privileged jesters.³⁹

III. THE ANTIQUARY

Some of the most enthusiastic of the references to Scott's genius in Fontane's works concern the *Antiquary*. According to an unpublished diary entry for 1877,⁴⁰ Fontane went to the Harz to recuperate after working hard during June and July on *Vor dem Sturm*. Here he corrected the third volume of his novel and also read the *Antiquary*:⁴¹ "My enthusiasm was at first as of old; but there runs through his (viz., Scott's) whole production an element of the superficial, of taking things too easily in his work, and many things are absolutely slurred over. Only his rare talent and perhaps still more his unique personal charm (which is reflected in everything) cause me to overlook these sloppy tricks. When I closed the book I drew a deep breath and said from the bottom of my heart—'Out with your conviction, you too will do as well'."

Thus as the German author is putting the finishing touches on his first novel, he re-reads a favorite work by Scott, partly at least as a basis of comparison for his own book. This quotation, when taken with the parallels which have been discussed, furnishes collateral evidence of Fontane's indebtedness to Scott in *Vor dem Sturm*.

³⁸ Chap. XII.

³⁹ Cf. his explanation of the ditch to Oldbuck, Chap. IV.

⁴⁰ Printed in part in Trebein, *op. cit.*, p. 2, note.

⁴¹ The following quotation from Fontane's unpublished diary was placed at my disposal by Miss Trebein.

Seidentopf, Fontane's antiquary in *Vor dem Sturm*, seems to have been suggested by Oldbuck, the antiquary in Scott's novel.⁴² Both men have been overcome by the delight of the collector, in spite of the fact that they have been trained for another profession (Seidentopf for the ministry and Oldbuck for the law). Each author devotes considerable space to a humorous description of the amateur museums of his antiquary.⁴³ Both Seidentopf and Oldbuck have a particular crony, in each case a less skilled antiquary of a different type, who becomes an opponent in heated arguments. To be sure, Seidentopf's old university comrade, *Justizrat* Turgany, is too much the elegant man of the world to give himself up entirely to such a hobby, but being fond of a good argument, he constitutes himself the champion of Panslavism.

Oldbuck is a shrewd burgher, an adherent of the Protestant Succession and descendant of a German printer, whereas his irascible, visionary opponent, Sir Arthur Wardour, has a long pedigree and a sentimental leaning toward the Stuart cause. His knowledge of his antiquarian hobby is not so sound as that of Oldbuck. The latter has one striking trait in common with Seidentopf. Both have a favorite ethnic origin for their native country—in each case Teutonic. Seidentopf considers Slavic (Wendish) civilisation, Monkbarns Celtic civilisation, inferior to Germanic.

We may compare also the argument over the origin of the chariot in *Vor dem Sturm*⁴⁴ with the dispute over the derivation of the word "benvall" in the *Antiquary*.⁴⁵ In the first case Ren-

⁴² It must, however, be admitted that Fontane, in preparing his *Wanderungen durch die Mark Brandenburg*, became something of an antiquary himself and was manifestly interested in this type. Cf. his antiquary in *Unwiederbringlich* and *Der Stechlin*.

⁴³ Chap. XI in *Vor dem Sturm* and Chap. III in the *Antiquary*.

⁴⁴ Chap. XIII.

⁴⁵ Chap. VI.

ate is summoned to decide whether a chariot is Teutonic or Wendish; in the second, Lovel is called upon as umpire to determine whether the word is Teutonic or Celtic.

Seidentopf and Oldbuck are, of course, different types save in their passion for collecting. Their hobby, however, is always presented in a similar light of gentle humor.

The romantic history of the noble family Vitzewitz in *Vor dem Sturm* bears striking resemblances to that of the house of Wardour in the *Antiquary*. In Fontane's novel the author reviews for us the varied fortunes of the Vitzewitz family in the Middle Ages, while in Scott's novel Edie Ochiltree relates the story of Sir Arthour Wardour's family, taking us back to the twelfth century.

In both novels a brothers' quarrel has fateful consequences for the future of the family. In *Vor dem Sturm* two brothers dispute over allegiance to the emperor at a banquet held at the conclusion of the Thirty Years War. The younger, Matthias, an officer in the imperial army, slays his elder brother, Anselm, who has remained on his father's estate. After this deed, the hall in which the murder has taken place becomes a symbol of the misfortune which pursues the family, and the repentant Matthias turns it into a chapel, which he dedicates to expiatory rites. In the *Antiquary* the "Norman" Wardour marries the Scottish heiress of Knockwinnock. The latter has an illegitimate son, Malcolm Misticot, who wrests Knockwinnock from the rightful heir, holding the castle for a time and adding a tower, which is called by his name. However, the usurper is finally driven out by his half-brother and he retires to the priory of his uncle.

Since the fatal deed in each case misfortune has visited the family. The Vitzewitz line has been cursed since the time of the brothers' quarrel. For a hundred and fifty years it has consisted of but one member ("stand auf zwei Augen"). In the

first chapter Lewin learns that Matthias has been "seen" again in the old chapel and in a later chapter the sick Renate is terrified by a report that Matthias is once more praying before the altar.⁴⁶ Moreover, at the time of the story Berndt, in common with his countrymen, has suffered from the heavy hand of Napoleon and is by no means prosperous. In the *Antiquary* Sir Arthour Wardour has large possessions, but they are heavily encumbered by debt, and attempts to improve his situation with the aid of the "adept" Dousterswivel have only made matters worse.

In both novels legends, embodied in popular rhymes, have sprung up, prophesying a change of fortune which is to come to each family as the result of some striking event. This prophecy is fulfilled in each case through the aid of an humble outcast messenger.

The Vitzewitz family legend connects the entrance of new blood into the house and the consequent removal of the old curse with a mysterious fire:

"Und eine Prinzessin kommt ins Haus,
Da löscht ein Feuer den Blutfleck aus,
Der auseinander getane Stamm
Wird wieder eins, wächst wieder zusamm'
Und wieder von seinem alten Sitz
Blickt in den Morgen Haus Vitzewitz."

The riddle is solved in the following manner: When fire breaks out at Hohen-Vietz, Hoppenmarieken alone can check the blaze with her magic, but the author allows her to let the haunted hall burn down.⁴⁷ After this event Berndt, in a hopeful mood, quotes the first two lines of the above rhyme. We are not informed at once who the "princess" is. But Chapter

⁴⁶ Chap. XXXIII.

⁴⁷ Chap. XLV.

LXXXI is entitled "Und eine Prinzessin kommt ins Haus." Marie is to marry the hero and Renate is now able to assert her belief in magic rites and popular rhymes.

The Wardours, on the other hand, do not know where the usurper Malcolm is buried. According to the popular legend, however:

"If Malcolm the Misticot's grave were fun',

The lands of Knockwinnock are lost and won."

When a party is digging for treasure, Edie helps to locate Misticot's grave, beneath which is found a quantity of silver.⁴⁸ This discovery marks the turning point in the rehabilitation of the Wardour fortunes.

A rhymed prophecy of this sort can be found in others of the Waverley Novels, notably the *Pirate* and the *Bride of Lammermoor*. Yet in these novels, which show little or no influence on Fontane's works, it is *misfortune* which is predicted.

However *Guy Mannering*, like the *Antiquary*, contains a rhymed prophecy foretelling good fortune, which is to come to the family as a result of some dramatic event, and which finally arrives through the aid of an outcast figure. A half-defaced motto on the ruins of Ellangowan castle, reading,

"our might makes our right,"

forms the *leit-motif* of *Guy Mannering*, which in some respects resembles the mechanical fate-drama. The prophecy connected with the Laird's house runs:

"The dark shall be light

And the wrong made right

When Bertram's right and Bertram's might

Shall meet on Ellangowan height."⁴⁹

For the way in which Meg Merrilies accomplishes the miracle, see above, p. 50.

⁴⁸ Chap. XXIII.

⁴⁹ Chaps. XLI and XLIX.

CHAPTER V

MINOR INFLUENCES OF SCOTT IN MOTIVE AND TECHNIQUE

In addition to the important influence of Scott's novels on Fontane's *Vor dem Sturm*, there are also to be found minor points of similarity to the Waverley Novels in a number of the German writer's works, both from his early and from his late period. These points of contact which concern motive, and to a lesser degree technique, are, considered separately, perhaps not of great importance, but taken together, they are very significant since they add measurably to Fontane's indebtedness to Scott and also prove that the latter's influence did not cease entirely with *Vor dem Sturm*.

MATHILDE MÖHRING AND JEANIE DEANS

The *Heart of Midlothian* was a favorite with Fontane, who refers to it in his works and letters on several occasions. During a vacation the poet read the whole novel in a few days. He writes to his wife of this work: "In some places not much different from a better type of *Räuberroman*, the whole is nevertheless of such a colossal beauty that I have . . . jumped up many times and paced up and down my room making addresses of admiration to the deceased."¹

The name "Effi", as we shall see, Fontane borrowed probably from this source for the heroine of his masterpiece, *Effi Briest*. But he gave even stronger evidence of his fondness for the main character in Scott's novel, Jeanie Deans. She was for

¹ Sept. 2, 1868. W, 2, VI, 160.

him one of the British master's creations whom even Alexis does not surpass.²

Mathilde Möhring, a novel which is published in the posthumous volume of Fontane's works,³ offers striking parallels to that part of the *Heart of Midlothian* which is concerned with Jeanie Deans. Ettlinger in his excellent introduction to the story states that this work of Fontane's which exists only in the first version, (*Niederschrift*), was written in 1891, in the author's richest period of production.⁴ It is significant that *Mathilde Möhring* was thus conceived at the time when *Effi Briest* occupied the foreground of the poet's attention.⁵ If the tragic transgression of the gay, irresponsible Effie Deans reminds us of the fate of Effi Briest, the plain, dutiful life and nature of her sensible sister Jeanie reminds us of Mathilde Möhring's purposeful activity. As Gaebel points out,⁶ the *Heart of Midlothian* begins as a tragedy and ends as an idyll. It is the idyllic part, of which Jeanie is the center, that may well have suggested the figure of Mathilde to Fontane. Wandrey surmises⁷ that one reason for the postponement of the completion of *Mathilde Möhring*, which was practically finished in the first version of 1891, except for the ending and details of diction, and which seems to have promised to become a novel of some length, was that the poet could put more of his own solution of life's problems into *Effi Briest*.

Mathilde Möhring, as the author left it, occupies a unique position among his works. In it there are no differences of class or temperament or age to form insurmountable barriers

² Cf. letter, April 24, 1880. W, 2, XI, 6. Cf. also above, p. 34.

³ W, 2, IX, 1ff.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. XII.

⁵ *Effi Briest* was begun 1889, completed 1895.

⁶ Kurt Gaebel, *Beiträge zur Technik der Erzählung in den Romanen Walter Scotts*. Marburger Studien zur englischen Philologie. Heft. 2, 1901, S. 51.

⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 248.

between the lovers, as is the case in *Effi Briest* and others of Fontane's novels of this kind. Furthermore, we are given in *Mathilde Möhring* straightforward action, without the usual discussion of ethical or social problems. But the idyllic, toward which the story, as it stands, inevitably tends, was not Fontane's peculiar province. In the majority of his novels the characters suffer shipwreck because their aims and ambitions,—which may in themselves be entirely justified,—conflict with the immutable order of things in the world. The poet appears to have tried unsuccessfully to bring this story within his range by introducing a tragic touch at the end (in the death of Thilde's husband from exposure), and by punishing Thilde for her presumption in seeking to rise above her sphere.

While it would be presumptuous to claim that Fontane deliberately modelled Mathilde Möhring on Jeanie Deans,—for that he was too mature and too original,—nevertheless, he may well have been prompted by Scott's heroine to treat a psychologically-related Berlin type, which he knew well, to place her in a certain position, and to watch developments.

If we make due allowance for the difference in technique, nature and scene of *Mathilde Möhring* and the *Heart of Midlothian*, we shall find a striking parallelism in the story, and especially in the character of the Berlin *Kleinbürgerin* and the Scottish peasant lass. In each case a plain, but acutely intelligent, practical girl in humble and straightened circumstances greatly improves the fortunes of herself and her family by an unusual and daring action, which leads her out of her narrow world into higher social spheres. Capable and strong-willed, but with little education in the ordinary sense of the word, she is yet by her own efforts responsible for the rise of the learned, yet weaker, impractical lover, who later becomes her husband.

Mathilde marries the Möhring lodger, Hugo Grossmann, a law student, possessing but little energy or initiative. With infinite tact and skill the girl gets this dreamer past his law examination, secures for him the position of mayor of a small West Prussian town,—and as the power behind the throne, makes her husband efficient and popular with all classes of citizens. Jeanie Deans, on her own initiative, travels to London, where she obtains the king's pardon for her sister, condemned to death for infanticide. At the same time she gains through her sturdy native winsomeness and unabashed good sense the favor of the Duke of Argyle, who makes the fortune of herself, her family and her lover, the delicate, impractical, nervous clergyman, Reuben Butler.

Thilde and Jeanie occupy corresponding positions in the social scale,—the former is the daughter of a Berlin book-keeper, the latter, of an intelligent tenant farmer. Both girls grow up in straightened circumstances, a fact which strengthens and develops an inherent practicality. Mathilde Möhring lives with her widowed mother, who is as dependent as a child on her daughter, and the narrow income of the two is eked out by taking lodgers. The girl's capability is reflected in the ways in which she manages even the smallest household duties. On the other hand, Jeanie Deans has been trained from her earliest years to efficiency in common tasks,⁸ and after the death of her step-mother Jeanie becomes a second mother to her half-sister, the willful, mischievous Effie.

Neither Mathilde nor Jeanie is attractive in the conventional sense of the word. It is rather their intelligence and healthy-mindedness which make a pleasing impression on all whom they meet. Thilde is described as neat and energetic, but without charm. Jeanie too lacks the usual attributes of

⁸ She herds cattle and sheep and is able on one occasion to protect her bookish playmate Butler from the disastrous consequences of neglecting his field duties.

beauty, and is depicted as serene rather than beautiful. She is quite eclipsed by her handsome, popular sister. The author in each case has given his character a certain sobriety in appearance and conduct. Thilde and Jeanie are sober even in their love, although by no means lacking in affection.

The core of the relationship of the two figures really rests in their character. One might almost consider them national types. Hugo sums up Thilde: "not really beautiful, . . . but clever and brave, . . . a genuine German girl, full of character, a person, who must make everyone happy, and of a great depth of feeling, mental and moral."⁹ Jeanie Deans, too, unlike Scott's conventional, idealized female characters from the higher walks of life, can stand as a good representative of her countrywomen.

Both Thilde and Jeanie are simple and sound, of an uncomplicated mental and psychic constitution. They face no psychological conflicts, no doubts nor hesitations in the difficult positions into which they are thrust; the motive power for their unusual activity is furnished by their strong sense of duty. Finally, it is native intelligence and tact which guides each heroine along her thorny road and which enables her to cope with every situation which arises,—Mathilde among the dignitaries of the West Prussian town and Jeanie as a suppliant before the Duke of Argyle. Moreover, their innate good sense never allows the success of their plans to overcome their natural modesty and sense of propriety.

Besides *Vor dem Sturm* and *Mathilde Möhring* four other novels of Fontane show distinct traces of Scott influence, the German author's indebtedness ranging in extent from a whole scene in *Grete Minde* to the general atmosphere in *Graf Petöfy*.

⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 41.

The novels under consideration will be treated in chronological sequence.

A minor point of motive in *Vor dem Sturm* which suggests Waverley influence should, however, be mentioned first. The military engagement in Frankfort on the Oder in this novel and the battle of Bothwell Bridge in *Old Mortality* occupy analogous functions in the respective novels. The general situation is the same—the Prussian rebellion against the Napoleonic yoke corresponds to the uprising of the Scotch Covenanters against Charles II. Both battles come near the end of the story and each marks a turning-point in the career of the hero. The insurgents are defeated and the hero sentenced to death,¹⁰ but he is saved by a faithful, humble adherent.¹¹

GRETE MINDE

In the dramatic final scene of Fontane's *Grete Minde* (1880) there is a strong suggestion of an analogous scene in Scott's *Ivanhoe*. Fontane's story, which bears the subtitle *nach einer altmärkischen Chronik*, is full of romantic elements. One of these, the story of the woman who is refused her inheritance by a grasping relative, and who in revenge sets fire to the town of Tangermünde, Fontane probably found in the old seventeenth-century chronicles of Helmreich and Ritner.¹² The poet, however, could not allow his heroine to end as did the historical Grete, who died at the stake on March 22, 1619, for her alleged crime. Fontane has deepened and strengthened the motivation of his central character, Grete, and also removed

¹⁰ In *Old Mortality*, to be sure, by fanatics in his own army.

¹¹ It should be noted that *Old Mortality* is one of the very few Waverley Novels in which the hero passes through some psychological development. Henry Morton, a mild-tempered youth like Lewin and Waverley, becomes through the power of circumstances a forceful man.

¹² Cf. *Grete Minde*, edited by H. W. Thayer, p. XXIII.

the criminal elements prominent in the sources. As he shapes the story, Grete returns from her wanderings to seek asylum for herself and child with her half-brother, Gerdt. But the latter stubbornly refuses this and also denies his sister's right to her inheritance. In addition to this, he persuades the town councilors to reject Grete's suit when she brings it before them. At night the girl, her mind unhinged by the wrongs she has suffered, starts a conflagration, humming nursery rhymes as the blaze spreads. Completely insane, she takes advantage of the ensuing confusion to seize her brother's little boy. With this child and her own she mounts high up into a church tower. All eyes are drawn to the trio, sharply illuminated by the brilliance of the fire, when suddenly the church collapses.

In Scott's *Ivanhoe*, Ulrica is an old Saxon crone, who plays an important role in the siege of Torquilstone. Years before the time of the story, her father and brothers had been slain by Front de Bœuf's father, who seized her as well as the castle Torquilstone as booty. Now, when the castle is hard pressed by the besieging Saxons, the old woman sets fire to the building from within, and when the Norman lord of the castle, the dying Front de Bœuf, calls for a priest, instead of the ghostly father, the woman whom he and his family have wronged, appears to gloat over his suffering. Having then informed her victim of the state of affairs, Ulrica locks him in his room, and when the fire has gained a secure foothold in the castle, the hag makes her appearance on a turret singing in maniacal glee. Her figure is the cynosure of all eyes, when suddenly the turret collapses.

GRAF PETÖFY

There are also distinct and unmistakable reflections of Scott in *Graf Petöfy* (1884). In this novel, in which Fontane shifts the scene of the story from familiar Brandenburg to the alien

soil of Austria and Hungary, certain of the exotic effects remind the reader of Scott. To Count Petöfy's young wife, the North German Franziska, everything in her new Hungarian home is totally strange. The peculiar customs of the country, the castle and its history, popular legends and the picturesque environs of Arpa we see through Franziska's eyes very much as Scott in such novels as *Waverley* and *Rob Roy* presents new scenes and manners through the eyes of his hero.¹³

One episode in particular in *Graf Petöfy* is strongly reminiscent of Scott. When it is reported that the gardener's daughter at Arpa has been kidnapped by a wicked old woman who sprang out from behind a bush, a search is instituted for the girl. Franziska and her husband's nephew, separated from the rest of the party, are caught and nearly drowned in a storm on the lake and forced to land on an island, where they pass the night. Recounting the events at the castle the next day, Franziska says: "Really, everything was half fairy tale, half Walter Scott."¹⁴

Another point in *Graf Petöfy* suggests the influence of Scott. On the day when the wedding party first arrived at Arpa a bell which was ringing out a welcome suddenly cracked. The bride took this occurrence as a bad omen. Later, when Franziska returns to Arpa after the suicide of her husband, the bell, which has in the meantime been repaired, rings once more. There is a similar bell-symbolism in *Rob Roy*. When King William landed in England, the old dinner-bell at Osbaldistone Hall cracks, and the staunch Jacobite, Sir Hildebrand, does not permit it to be mended.

¹³ Cf. Waverley's visit to the Scotch Highlands,—*Waverley*, Chap. XVII ff., also Francis Osbaldistone's Sunday in Glasgow,—*Rob Roy*, Chap. XIX and XX.

¹⁴ W, I, IV, 197.

QUITT

The character of l'Hermite in *Quitt* (1891) probably owes some features to Tristan l'Hermite in Scott's *Quentin Durward*, a book which as a favorite of Fontane's father must have become familiar to Theodor from his boyhood in Swinemünde.¹⁵ Camille l'Hermite, or Monsieur l'Hermite, as he is generally called, is an episodic figure in the second part of Fontane's work. He has found refuge in the Mennonite colony at Nogat-Ehre in the United States, where a number of peculiar figures have congregated. L'Hermite is a fanatic, a hatcher of visionary schemes, who is working for a universal panacea, the rule of the "idea." As a leader of the French Commune, he gave the order to have the Archbishop of Paris shot. Himself condemned to death, he made a miraculous escape.

In *Quentin Durward*, on the other hand, the bloodthirsty provost-marshal and chief hangman of Louis XI is called Tristan l'Hermite.¹⁶ He is as anxious to obtain high-born victims for his office as is his namesake in *Quitt* to sacrifice to his fanatic idea of benefiting humanity an archbishop, an emperor or a pope.¹⁷ Fontane, to be sure, has given his character a number of sympathetic traits; he is no mere butcher like Tristan, but is represented as partially insane.

EFFI BRIEST

Traces of Scott can be found in *Effi Briest* (1895). The heroine in this novel, which contains a number of romantic elements, bears the nickname Effi.¹⁸ Considering the rareness of this name and the author's fondness for foreign names in his novels, it is highly probable that he borrowed this from Effie

¹⁵ W, 2, II, 106.

¹⁶ It must be admitted that Tristan l'Hermite was an historical character.

¹⁷ W, 1, VI, 167.

¹⁸ Presumably the full name is Euphemia.

Deans in Scott's *Heart of Midlothian*.¹⁹ Even though Fontane states that he obtained the story of *Effi Briest* from a friend,²⁰ one is tempted to think that Effie Deans supplied several traits for his Effi Briest. Both are inexperienced, yet mischievous, exuberant characters, whose environment becomes irksome and whose ultimate fall is to be attributed to an attempt to escape from ennui and monotony. Moreover, the poet writes that the appearance of his heroine was suggested by the dress of two English Methodists,²¹ a fact which would call to mind the daughters of the strict Presbyterian, David Deans.

NARRATIVE STYLE AND TECHNIQUE

Fontane, unlike an author of the type of Gottfried Keller, the naive writer, was a conscious artist, a stylist.²² He obtained the subtle effects in the technique of his novels by careful calculation. This virtuosity can be observed in many aspects of the poet's works,—in the dialogue of his subordinate figures, in the wit and finesse of the speech of his educated characters, also in his technique of foreshadowing and suggestion, etc.

As there are evidences of romantic subject-matter even in the later novels of Fontane, so there is an approach to the technique of the romanticists in many of his works. Among these points may be cited the following: the author addresses himself directly to the reader; many of the novels contain letters; lyrics are scattered through many of the works; the

¹⁹ Euphemia Deans is also called Phemi. Cf. Fontane's character Phemi La Grange in *Graf Petöfy*.

²⁰ Letter, March 2, 1895. W, 2, XI, 341.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 342.

²² This fact accounts for Fontane's inability to enjoy fully the works of the Swiss author (cf. Chap. III), and also for his admiration of the form of French novels.

author displays a fondness for romantic characters and scenes, etc.

Since Fontane shows points of similarity to Scott in the subject-matter of his novels, we might expect to find some influence of the British author in technique. Before reaching a conclusion, however, it will be wise, to consider first whether Fontane may not have had other sources for his stylistic peculiarities.²³

First of all, the German author's interest in the ballad must be taken into account. It would be strange indeed if Fontane's long occupation with this form had left no traces in his prose works. As a matter of fact, there are distinct marks of ballad influence in a number of Fontane's novels. *Grete Minde* and *Ellernklipp* could with little difficulty be re-written as ballads. As Ettlinger states,²⁴ the former suggests an old popular ballad and the latter a gloomy ballad by Hebbel. It might also be claimed that other novels of Fontane, viz., *Quitt*, *Unwiederbringlich*, *Cécile* and *Effi Briest*, partake to a greater or less degree of the nature of the ballad. The earmarks of this genre may be outlined as follows: The tragic story is simple and sharply outlined, the gloomy atmosphere is often heightened by suggestions of the supernatural and the reader is made to feel that the destiny meted out to the actors is inescapable, hence the author does not sentimentalize over their fate. Furthermore, at critical junctures the author passes over several years, and avoids presenting directly crises, whether of passions or events, preferring to enlighten the reader by indirect means.

The possible influence of the German romanticists must also

²³ Kricker, *op. cit.*, to whom I am largely indebted in this part of my study, has investigated the technique of Fontane's novels very thoroughly.

²⁴ *Theodor Fontane*. Vol. XVIII of series *Die Literatur*, edited by Georg Brandes, p. 19.

be considered when examining Fontane's technique. However, Fontane's letters and autobiographical works do not indicate that he felt much indebtedness in this direction. Moreover, the style of the German romanticists, as well as that of Alexis, is so absolutely different from Fontane's as to exclude the idea of his dependence on them. What might seem to be a romantic freedom of form in his novels is largely rooted in the poet's manner of composition. He had the habit of loosening the structure of his novels by the insertion of anecdotes and episodes. Although the author always worked very painstakingly, he had his own ideas regarding the technique of his fiction.²⁵ This is especially true of *Vor dem Sturm*, the composition of which falls in the period when the poet was working on the first volumes of his *Wanderungen durch die Mark Brandenburg*.²⁶ "Indeed," says Wandrey, "the world of his novels is deeply indebted to the *Wanderungen*, the beginning and portal of which, *Vor dem Sturm*, is by no means conceivable without them."²⁷ As a matter of fact, the stylistic methods employed by the author of the *Wanderungen* explain at least three points of technique, particularly in Fontane's early fiction, which one would otherwise be inclined to attribute to the influence of the Waverley Novels.

The first point of similarity to Scott is found in Fontane's custom of describing places as they appear to a visitor, particularly to the hero on his return home after an extended absence.²⁸ Examples of this which appear in the German

²⁵ Fontane defends *Vor dem Sturm* against the charge of the violation of the law of epic style (*episches Stilgesetz*), according to which the author should not come between the reader and his narrative, by appealing to the example of the "most famous and most charming" English novelists. Cf. letter, Jan. 14, 1879. W, 2, X, 405.

²⁶ *Die Grafschaft Ruppin*, 1862; *Das Oderland*, 1863; *Havelland*, 1873.

²⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 88.

²⁸ Cf. Krickler, *op. cit.*, pp. 57, 70.

author are Hohen-Vietz in *Vor dem Sturm*,²⁹ Castle Wuthenow in *Schach von Wuthenow*,³⁰ and Stechlin in *Der Stechlin*.³¹ Similar examples from Scott are Tully-Veolan in *Waverley*,³² and Monkbarrow's estate in the *Antiquary*.³³ The circumstances of Schach's flight to Wuthenow remind us especially of Henry Morton's return to Milnwood in *Old Mortality*.³⁴ However it is more probable that Fontane simply adopted the mode of description used so naturally and so often by the wanderer through the Mark Brandenburg.

In his earlier novels, especially *Vor dem Sturm*, Fontane often acts as intermediary between his characters and the reader. He uses the phrases "our hero," "our friend," "before-mentioned," etc. Sometimes the reader is addressed directly, as the following examples from *Vor dem Sturm* will show: "In the hall there are still some brands smoldering; let us heap on pine-cones and chat . . . of Hohen-Vietz."³⁵ "Since we have nowhere in the long course of our story been able to discover a point which would afford space for a biographical sketch under the title 'Aunt Schorlemmer,' we consider the moment come to discharge our duty toward this excellent lady."³⁶ "The course of our story takes us during the next chapters from Hohen-Vietz to"³⁷

As Kricker states, these technical devices suggest at the first glance Scott, in whose novels they are extremely common,³⁸ but it is even more probable that here again the poet is influenced by the style of the *Wanderungen*.

²⁹ Chap. I.

³⁰ Chap. XIV.

³¹ Chap. II.

³² Chaps. VIII and IX.

³³ Chap. III.

³⁴ Chap. XXXIX.

³⁵ W, I, I, 12.

³⁶ P. 51.

³⁷ P. 154.

³⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 75.

A third point of technique which suggests Scott's novels is Fontane's peculiar method of introducing the characters in his earlier novels, especially *Vor dem Sturm*. The author gives a fairly complete sketch, often with a brief biography, of persons before they are allowed to take part in the action. Examples are: "Berndt von Vitzewitz,"³⁹ "Hoppenmarieken,"⁴⁰ "Pastor Seidentopf,"⁴¹ "Allerlei Freunde."⁴²

Kricker notes the similarity between this method of character-portraiture and that used by Scott, especially in the case of his minor characters,⁴³ but here too it is highly probable that Fontane has taken over a customary procedure from his *Wanderungen*, where we are given many portrait-sketches of persons as they are suggested by the country and its monuments.

Kricker also compares the numerous parentheses with a humorous purpose in Fontane with similar effects in Scott.⁴⁴ Influence in this point is very improbable, however, as it is chiefly in the novels of the mature, independent writer in which we find most of these devices.

It is, in fact, precisely in his style that Fontane's title to originality rests. We must therefore be very cautious in arguing influences in this regard. The *subject-matter* in Fontane's novels was seldom original with him: he preferred to treat actual events. It was his *mode of treatment* that raised him head and shoulders above most of his fellow craftsmen.

³⁹ Chap. IV.

⁴⁰ Chap. VIII.

⁴¹ Chap. XI.

⁴² Chap. XX.

⁴³ *Op. cit.*, p. 105.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

CONCLUSION

After investigation of the works of Fontane and his relation to England and English literature it is possible to outline with some claim to definiteness the scope of Scott's influence. This will be done by traversing briefly the conclusions recorded in the different stages of the present study.

In Swinemünde, whither Fontane's parents moved in Theodor's seventh year, the seeds of the man's interest in Walter Scott were sown, for here the boy first came in contact with the Waverley Novels. This first contact came through his father, whose naive and charming personality the son greatly admired. These seeds fell on fertile soil, for the boy's imagination had been stimulated by hearing English spoken and by listening to the strange, romantic tales of sea-faring people, among whom were Britishers.

Another factor which must have been potent in developing young Fontane's fondness for the novels of Scott was his interest in history, also in large measure an heritage from his father.¹ In the battle which the author's first poem, "Die Schlacht bei Hochkirch," celebrates it is a Scotch hero, Marshal Keith, who loses his life on a Prussian battlefield.

In the next few years, among the many literary fashions which the versatile young apothecary followed, the poet's occupation with English literature is the one constant element. This interest was crystallized and given direction when in 1844 Fontane took his first trip to England and also joined the important Berlin literary society, the "Tunnel über der Spree."²

¹ See above, p. 1.

² See above, p. 4 f.

For the next eleven years, from 1844 to 1855, prior to his last sojourn in England, Fontane was primarily the author of historical ballads on English and Scotch themes. In 1848 the discovery of Percy's *Reliques of Ancient Poetry* and Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* opened up a new field and introduced him to a wealth of old ballads, a number of which served as models for free translations. At the same time Fontane translated poems by modern English and Scotch authors. From this period also there date several dramas and stories from English history.³

In 1852 there began for Fontane his first intimate acquaintance with English life and institutions. His residence as journalist in London in 1852 and 1855-59 exerted a profound influence on his subsequent life and development as an author.⁴ To the disagreeable side of his London existence, to the lack of *Gemütlichkeit* of which he complains, the journalist was reconciled by his appreciation of the educational value of his foreign residence. Furthermore, by a thorough familiarity with London life Fontane developed independence and self-confidence. At the same time he tired of the journalistic grind, and feeling the stir of the creative impulse within him, he was glad to return home in 1859 when the Manteuffel ministry collapsed.

Of the three collections of feuilletons which grew out of Fontane's journalistic activity abroad, *Ein Sommer in London* (1854) is important, since it gives a fairly complete presentation of the author's reaction to English life and institutions, which was but little modified in later years. Preferring England's romantic past to its commercial present, Fontane was particularly interested in the many historical monuments, for

³ In fragmentary form or not included in the later editions of the author's works.

⁴ See above. Chap. II.

these represented to him a phase of British life which had passed away. Indeed, the journalist believed he saw signs of decadence in the nation; in his opinion "merry old England" had given way to the "money-making people of the nineteenth century."⁵ Nor could the manifestations of *political* democracy, so unlike anything in the Germany of that time, impress him favorably, for *social* democracy, in which he was chiefly interested, he missed entirely in England.

Jenseit des Tweed (1860), another collection of feuilletons from this period, contains a description of the author's journey through Scotland in 1858. Here the poet felt more at home than in England, partly because in this relatively backward country the present was not yet significant enough to dim the brilliance of its beloved and honored past. In Scotland Fontane availed himself of the opportunity to visit the monuments of his favorites, Mary Stuart and the Douglasses; but it is Walter Scott who is for him the arch-magician, lending enchantment alike to buildings and battlefields, ancient towns and picturesque country-sides.

Journeying through a section of the Scotland which is important as the birthplace of great men, our traveler is reminded of a similar country at home in the Mark Brandenburg, and so the idea of the *Wanderungen durch die Mark Brandenburg* is conceived. Thus the trip through Scotland gave shape and direction to the creative impulses arising during the later years of Fontane's London residence.

There is little to be added to the German author's attitude toward things British as presented in these two collections of feuilletons: tested by his last, autobiographical novel *Der Stechlin* (1898), his opinions of the island empire underwent no perceptible change.

Fontane learned a great deal from English literature, just

⁵*Ein Sommer in London.* W, 2, IV, 27.

how much, still remains largely to be determined. The poet's admiration of ancient British ballads and the writings of Shakespeare, Burns and Scott has already been noted. But in addition to these works, he was fond of the English humorists, especially Thackeray and Dickens, but also of Smollett, Fielding and Sterne.

Scott's influence in Germany, at its height in Fontane's youth, led to countless imitations. Whereas the many hacks following in the British author's footsteps imitated merely his external romantic technique, the serious writers of historical novels usually wrote with a national basis. Chief among the latter was Alexis, who in his patriotic novels developed the history of the Mark Brandenburg. With this writer Fontane is naturally associated, since both followed the Scott tradition in their patriotic labors as poets of Brandenburg.

In a series of essays, the most important of which is devoted to Alexis, Fontane's attitude toward the historical novel is set forth in some detail. Here the critic compares Alexis and Scott in their treatment of the historical novel, almost always commending Scott as the desirable model.⁶

When we come to study the content of Fontane's fiction, we find many points of indebtedness to Scott, although the direct influence of the Waverley Novels on the stories of the German writer is confined chiefly to *Vor dem Sturm*. This novel contains a number of points of similarity with *Waverley*. One formula expresses the outlines of plot in both works. The young, inexperienced hero is first captivated by the charms of a brilliant, worldly girl. However, the latter does not return his affection, although her relative favors the match in order to advance his own ambitions. In the stress

⁶ For a discussion of Fontane's technique in his first historical novel *Vor dem Sturm*, see above, p. 35 ff.

of the campaign the hero first realizes his love for the modest, naive girl who has loved him from the beginning.

The four figures, the chief participants in this action, are very similar in both novels. The heroes of *Vor dem Sturm* and *Waverley*, Lewin von Vitzewitz and Edward Waverley, are romantic dreamers with literary tastes. Hence they both make poor soldiers and are averse to society. Their true ideal both finally realize in domestic happiness. The hero's first love, Kathinka Ladalinski and Flora MacIvor, Pole and Celt, respectively represent to him the romantic and the exotic. Worldly and ambitious, these girls quickly gain an ascendancy over the inexperienced youth. The hero's true-love, Marie Kniehase and Rose Bradwardine, the naive girls, are contrasted by the authors with their brilliant rivals in the affection of the hero. Shy and domestic, *feeling* is more important with them than *intellect*, and their love for the hero develops gradually from association and admiration. The latter, however, for a long time is not conscious of more than platonic regard for the domestic girl, and he does not declare his love for her until this sentiment has been crystallized by a military crisis.

The fourth character in the common plot, *Geheimrat* Ladalinski and Fergus MacIvor, respectively father and brother of the brilliant girl, is an ambitious man, who hopes to advance himself through the marriage of the girl to the hero. He is, however, doomed to disappointment.

Besides the four characters already mentioned, another figure, Hoppenmarieken, the old hag in *Vor dem Sturm*, owes much to *Waverley* prototypes. She bears most resemblance to the gypsy Meg Merrilies in *Guy Mannering*. Both outcasts, favored by the nobleman of the district, evince a great fondness for the hero; both promote the latter's fortune through their magic powers, and both finally sacrifice their

lives in his behalf.⁷ Hoppenmarieken as news-purveyor and jester also probably owes some traits to the picturesque beggar, Edie Ochiltree in the *Antiquary*.

A sixth figure in *Vor dem Sturm* which owes much to a *Waverley* model is Seidentopf, who bears a striking similarity to Oldbuck, the central figure in the *Antiquary*. Both men are amateur antiquaries, and the character of each is presented in a humorous light. Each has a boon companion of a contrasting type, who is a less serious antiquary, and against the latter each defends his pet thesis, that the origin of his native country is Germanic. Furthermore, an antiquarian dispute in *Vor dem Sturm* has a close parallel in a similar scene in the *Antiquary*.

Still another feature in *Vor dem Sturm*, the history of the Vitzewitz family, corresponds to an element in a *Waverley* novel, viz., the story of the Wardour ancestors in the *Antiquary*. Many years prior to the time of the novel a brothers' quarrel has divided the house and since then misfortune has pursued the family. However, rhymed prophecies spring up, predicting an improvement in the fortunes of the race, which is to come as the result of a striking event. This prophecy is fulfilled in each novel through the aid of an outcast messenger. *Guy Mannering* also contains a similar prophecy which is fulfilled in the same way.

In *Mathilde Möhring*, the slender realistic novel, published in the posthumous volume of Fontane's works, the author has attempted to do for his heroine what Scott achieved in the character of Jeanie Deans in the *Heart of Midlothian*. Both Thilde and Jeanie represent psychologically-related national types. Although they belong to the lower ranks of

⁷ To be sure, Fontane in the more realistic *Vor dem Sturm* cannot allow Hoppenmarieken as much power as does Scott in the case of his almost omnipotent Meg Merrilies.

society in their respective countries, these girls with their sound, uncomplicated and dutiful natures nevertheless succeed in overcoming the difficult obstacles in their way and in raising themselves and those near them to a more eminent position in the world. Both Thilde and Jeanie are practical and efficient, sober in appearance and conduct, and yet attractive because of their intelligence.

In addition to the more important points of contact between Scott and Fontane already mentioned, there are a number of minor and yet significant matters in the German author's novels which betray the influence of Scott. In *Vor dem Sturm* the battle of Frankfort on the Oder and the subsequent fate of the hero point to similar scenes in *Old Mortality*. The striking fire-scene at the end of *Grete Minde* seems to have been suggested by the burning of Torquilstone in *Ivanhoe*. The figure, Monsieur l'Hermite in *Quitt* is probably based on the character of Tristan l'Hermite, the executioner in *Quentin Durward*. *Graf Petöfy* shows evidences of general Scott influences, while *Effi Briest* is indebted to Effie Deans in the *Heart of Midlothian* for her name and perhaps for certain traits of character.

A number of points in the technique of Fontane's early novels suggest the influence of the romanticists, especially Scott. But some of these can be explained, (1) by the poet's ballad-technique, exhibited in several novels, (2) by a voluntary looseness of structure in his novels, (3) by stylistic features employed by Fontane in his *Wanderungen durch die Mark Brandenburg*.

As we have seen, in the *form* of his novels, a point on which the eminent stylist placed most emphasis, Fontane is practically independent of Scott. It is in the *content* of his fiction that he owes a debt to the British author. Limited as this debt is, it is nevertheless interesting and significant that the

appeal of the great Scotchman should reach and affect the German writer across barriers of nationality, of temperament, of training and of literary ideals.

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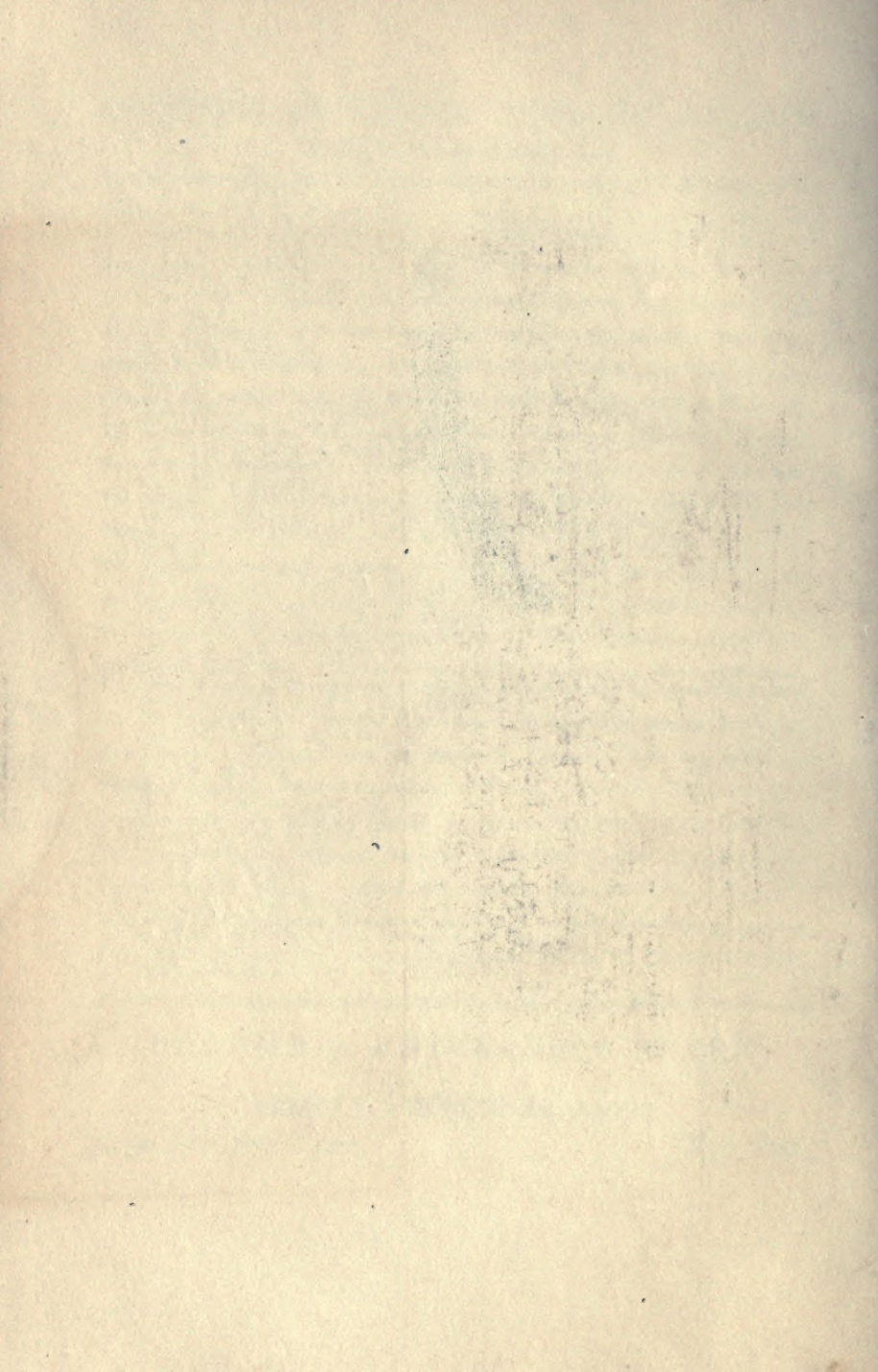
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